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ABSTRACT

This book traces the progress of the parent movement for drug-free youth, and describes a set of varied approaches to drug problems. Chapter 1 focuses on the actions of the city of Atlanta, Georgia in confronting drug problems and shows how that initial parent activism contained the seeds of the current national movement. Chapter 2 documents the evolution of the parent movement in Florida. The statewide ramifications of one family's actions to fight drug-abuse are presented. Chapter 3 focuses on the role of parental concern, grassroots activism, and community leadership in fighting drug abuse in the rural communities of Indiana. Chapter 4 presents the innovations in parent activism in the affluent suburban communities of southern Connecticut. Chapter 5 focuses on the parent organized door-to-door compaign in Omaha, Nebraska. Chapter 6 describes parent networking in Nassau County, New York. Chapter 7 presents the programs developed in the inner city black neighborhoods of Washington, D.C. Chapter 8 describes a statewide "war on drugs" project which took place in Texas. Chapter 9 features a California program which focuses on peer influence as a motivator for a drug-free lifestyle. The book concludes with two appendices: the goals, objectives, and guidelines of Unified Parents of America, and guidelines for how to give a successful party for teenagers, developed by Parents Who Care. (BL)

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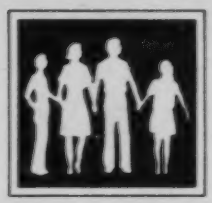
PARENTS PEERS AND POT II

Parents in Action



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by
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for the
National Institute on Drug Abuse

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FOREWORD

The dramatic rise in drug use in the United States from the early 1960s through the late 1970s was unprecedented in the history of the drug problem. Before 1960, less than 1 percent of the population had even tried an illicit drug and drug use was practically nonexistent in American high schools. By 1978, however, almost 68 percent of high school students had tried marijuana, an important indicator of illicit drug use, and almost 11 percent were using marijuana every day. An equally frightening phenomenon was the drop in the age of first use to 12- and 13-year-old children.

Statistics like these confirmed what many parents already suspected--the use of marijuana and other drugs had become epidemic and was present in their own communities. Dr. Marsha Manatt, author of this book, first wrote Parents, Peers, and Pot for the National Institute on Drug Abuse to tell the vivid and important story of successfully fighting the drug problem in her own neighborhood. Describing how to form parent support groups, Parents, Peers, and Pot became the guidebook of the parent movement for drug-free youth. It helped parents to resolve their uncertainties about the need to act and showed them a way to focus and assert their responsibility and authority.

As parent groups emerged all over the country, they provided increased visibility to the new research on marijuana's health hazards. They lobbied against drug paraphernalia dealers who were selling to children in local stores. They set up appropriate curfews and party rules so their children and their children's friends would follow the same parental guidelines. They proved that parent action works. Parents were no longer powerless in the face of the drug problem.

To encourage the continued expansion of parent and community efforts, NIDA is publishing Parents, Peers, and Pot--II: Parents in Action, which traces the subsequent progress of the parent movement and describes a set of varied approaches to the drug problem. Dr. Manatt captures both the frustrations as well as successes parents experience in making changes in their communities.

Solutions to the drug problem must involve all segments of our society--parents, teachers, law enforcement and government officials, religious and business leaders, health professionals, and young people themselves. For the first time, we can feel confident that our combined efforts can and will make a difference. In publishing this volume, NIDA once again expresses gratitude to Dr. Manatt for the uniquely valuable contribution she has made. Additionally, NIDA recognizes the many thousands of parents throughout the country who have expended the effort, energy, and personal resources to create a drug-free environment for children growing up in America today and tomorrow.

William Pollin, M.D.
Director
National Institute on Drug Abuse

PREFACE

This book, like its predecessor, Parents, Peers, and Pot, is an unusual type of Government publication. Rather than representing a consensus or synthesis of expert opinion, it is a personal account of the concerns, motivations, and actions of a diverse assortment of parents and young people. Coming from a wide variety of religious, political, and ethnic backgrounds, they have joined together in a citizens' movement for drug-free youth that has become national in scope and long-range in aim.

Like many powerful social movements, the parents' antidrug effort was born of fear, frustration, and friction when unprecedented shifts of values and behavior among the young confused and disturbed their elders. Sociologists, psychologists, and physicians were only beginning to deal with the ramifications of drug use by unconventional young adults, when the "subcultural" problem rapidly expanded to a majority of young adolescents. Few professionals were prepared by their training or previous experience to deal with this unexpected normalizing of illicit chemical experimentation by juveniles. But the least prepared adults were parents of the youthful "party-ers."

Reacting instinctively, parents sensed that premature drug and alcohol use was causing serious health and developmental problems in their children. Although scientists, academicians, and policymakers might quite properly debate and disagree over the long-range significance of these behavioral changes, many parents became impatient and angry that American youth were paying too high a price for society's confusion over the drug issue. Adding to their sense of urgency was the increasingly aggressive commercialism of the drug culture, which threatened to spread the problem to even younger children.

This book does not gloss over the conflicts and arguments that often surfaced when antidrug parent groups formed across the country. Rather, it attempts to chronicle the real life stories--the blunt speech, energy of personality, and resilient humor--of parents and teenagers who eventually surmounted the obstacles, learned to work out differences, and made significant changes in their communities.

I am grateful to the National Institute on Drug Abuse for publishing once again a book that is based on the author's simple premise: in a representative democracy, the solutions to serious social problems are absolutely dependent on the capacity of ordinary citizens to make extraordinary commitments to their neighborhood and Nation. No one else can do it for them.

Marsha Manatt

INTRODUCTION

Since 1977, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has worked closely with parents and organizations of parents toward preventing drug use among youth. This collaboration with the "parent movement" has enabled NIDA to lend support to emerging community parent groups and coalitions of parent groups through information, materials, and consultation. NIDA has also worked with and helped support drug and alcohol abuse single State agencies in their efforts to develop statewide initiatives for parents.

The publication of Parents, Peers, and Pot in 1979 provided many readers with the first major documentation of the development of parents and parent groups as a major force against drug use by youth. Since that time many developments have occurred to make the parent movement even more diverse.

The author of this publication, Marsha Manatt, and NIDA agreed that it would be important to describe some of the diversity of this movement, so that parents who were already involved would see what others were doing and so that parents who might be interested in becoming involved would better understand the issues. This book, Parents, Peers, and Pot--II: Parents in Action, is being published to serve that purpose. The book is relevant to the different urban, suburban, and rural areas of the country and looks at issues important to different institutions and individuals in the community: parents, physicians, schools, attorneys, law enforcement officials, clergy, voluntary organizations, professional counselors, and youth. Many of the communities described in the book are multicultural. Each chapter has a unique feature, and the reader will find that certain chapters address specific areas of interest. Many of the chapters also have common elements.

The following summary highlights the major points in each chapter.

Chapter One begins where the widely read Parents, Peers, and Pot ends. The author's first book described in detail her recognition of drug use in her daughter's circle of teenage

friends and her own as well as the community's actions in confronting the drug problem. This chapter documents the many impressive results achieved by the Atlanta parent groups, whose involvement in drug abuse prevention was relatively new at the time Parents, Peers, and Pot was written. An important part of the process, the chapter makes clear, is how parents educate themselves--and their communities--about drug abuse. The chapter also describes the response of Federal officials to the Atlanta parents' efforts, which led to the eventual publication of Parents, Peers, and Pot by NIDA. It documents in detail how parent activism and a courageous and determined principal transformed a leading Atlanta high school from a haven for drug-using teenagers to a drug-free environment that promotes academic success and the development of students' natural talents. As Atlanta parents became more determined, informed, and effective in their campaign against youthful drug abuse, the parent movement began to spread first to nearby communities, counties, and school systems, and then far beyond Georgia, partly through the formation of the nationally known Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) program. Thus, Chapter One shows how the initial parent activism in Atlanta contained the seeds of the current national movement.

Chapter Two documents the evolution of the parent movement in Florida, the second State to feel its impact statewide. Here the roots of activism are even more painful than they were for the author's own family in Atlanta. Bill and Pat Barton, the parents of two teenagers, found to their dismay that both children were heavily involved in drugs. The Bartons took a strong stand against drug abuse, even when that stand affected their own children. They asked local law enforcement officials for assistance and struggled for years to help their daughter lead a drug-free life. Although at first the Naples school system was reluctant to recognize the seriousness of the problem, the Bartons were unyielding in their determination to make their community free of drugs. Ultimately, Naples Informed Parents became the springboard for a statewide network of parent groups with its own State-funded support system. The Bartons' continuing commitment and dedication led to their leadership role in the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth.

Chapter Three tells movingly how a young couple's fight against drug abuse in their small town in Indiana grew from the fear and concern they felt when they saw another family's teenager in trouble. Even a rural community can be torn apart by drug abuse. The chapter offers encouragement in documenting how a newspaper editor and other community leaders initiated drug abuse prevention efforts. In another Indiana town the leadership

came from a concerned law enforcement officer. Here in the American heartland the drug problem may be serious, the chapter shows, but parental concern, grassroots activism, and the leadership of community institutions such as the media, the churches, and law enforcement officials are alive and well.

In Chapter Four the setting moves to the affluent suburban communities of southern Connecticut, where several important innovations in parent activism against drug abuse took place. One of the most significant developments in Connecticut was the involvement of the medical community. An influential physician realized that it was time for his profession to take a strong stand against youthful drug use, which was in contrast to the widely held view that youthful experimentation with drugs was not really so dangerous. Here too, for the first time, a strong network of private school parents was formed. The parents realized, however, that the drug problem reached all of the community's children; thus they formed close alliances with parents and administrators in public schools as well. Connecticut parents worked vigorously for antidrug legislation, and, at the same time, they pushed for more effective health and drug education curricula in the schools.

The scene shifts in Chapter Five to Omaha, Nebraska, where parents' concern about the drug problem among youth was given focus and impetus by an equally concerned superintendent of schools. Here, for the first time in the parent movement, parents successfully organized a door-to-door campaign to involve other parents and interested citizens in their community. Eventually the Omaha parents formed their own volunteer organization modeled on the PRIDE program in Atlanta. Parents developed a speakers bureau, a "parent hotline," and effective methods for overcoming the strong resistance of young people who believed that they had a "right" to use drugs.

Chapter Six tells the story of how a concerned drug abuse worker in suburban Nassau County, New York, helped to create important linkages among community groups and build strong parent and school networks to combat drug abuse. In one community, the PTA became the focal group. Program organizers effectively used the device of a town meeting to generate community interest and participation. Then, building on the momentum of the town meeting, the organizers developed workshops to enable concerned parents and other community residents to create an effective stand against drug abuse. In another community, the school system sponsored a series of workshops conducted by an influential athlete who helped to spread the message that "drug use isn't cool."

Several black neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., are the setting for Chapter Seven, which demonstrates that the techniques of parent and community activism against youthful drug abuse can be applied in a variety of communities, not just in affluent suburbs. In Washington the involvement of Head Start mothers was an important factor in the success of the parents' antidrug efforts. So was a strong emphasis on helping local teenagers to develop their talents and skills as an alternative to using drugs. Ultimately the efforts of the Washington parents led the city's mayor to proclaim a drug abuse prevention week and the city council to pass an anti-paraphernalia ordinance.

Chapter Eight tells the story of how leadership from some of the most influential individuals in the State of Texas--namely, the Governor and one of the State's most prominent businessmen--helped to mobilize a statewide drug abuse prevention effort that eventually involved hundreds and thousands of parents, educators, and other participants. The element of cooperation between the private and public sector is stronger here than in any of the other chapters and can serve as a model for future efforts that involve the business community in addressing urgent social problems. The Texas program has been multifaceted, covering drug-related legislation, mobilization of influential community groups, and support for both parents and young people in preventing drug problems.

Chapter Nine features a California program that leads the way in one of the most promising developments in drug abuse prevention to date: the formation of positive peer influence youth groups dedicated to maintaining drug-free lifestyles. These youth groups are an outgrowth of one of the most impressive and extensive parent mobilization efforts in the country. Thousands of California parents have joined parent groups under the aegis of an organization called Parents Who Care and placed full-page newspaper advertisements in their communities encouraging other parents to join their movement.

We hope that the reader will find important information in these chapters. The chapters tell different stories, but mainly stories of people, people who strongly feel they want to, and must do something about a major problem that faces them, their children, their communities, and their country.

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CHAPTER ONE
PARENT POWER IN GEORGIA:
BACKYARD ROOTS AND NATIONAL RAMIFICATIONS

In August 1976 a group of parents in Atlanta, Georgia, made the shocking discovery at a backyard birthday party that their sixth- through eighth-grade children were regularly smoking marijuana and occasionally drinking. After going through a painful process of denial, guilt, and accusation, the parents decided to join together to understand why their children were routinely "getting high," what the effects of such drug use might be, and, finally, what they as parents should do about it.

Thus began an eye-opening investigation into the kind of popular culture and social environment in which their children were growing up. The first lesson the parents learned was that the illegal use of drugs, especially marijuana and alcohol, had become accepted, normalized, "all-American" behavior for a majority of adolescents in their community. They also learned that the youngsters fervently believed in a mythology of "harmless marijuana"; they viewed the herb as a new wonder drug that cured cancer, prevented nearsightedness, cleaned out the lungs, and expanded the mind. Third, the children had absorbed a great deal of superficial rhetoric concerning their "rights" to make their own decisions about everything from staying out late to school curriculum to illegal drug use. Finally, the young people chorused that "<u>everybody</u> smokes pot," that drugs were everywhere, and that "partying" was synonymous with "getting high." For the increasingly alarmed parents it became obvious that they would have to counter powerful peer and cultural forces if they hoped to regain drug-free children and prevent more children from becoming drug-involved.

Despite the widely publicized attitude of some drug counselors and psychiatrists that marijuana was a relatively benign substance and that parents should not "hassle" their teenagers for using it, the Atlanta parents trusted their own gut instincts. They knew that their children were gradually deteriorating in personality, intellectual functioning, and physical health during their months of pot smoking. Thus, they were disappointed by the outdated drug pamphlets then available at agencies and

counseling centers that described marijuana as less harmful than alcohol and tobacco and seemed to give it a clean bill of health (by default). Deciding to prepare their own informational materials, they sought out the latest scientific research on marijuana at local medical libraries. They learned that marijuana is made up of a complex variety of fat soluble chemicals that accumulate in the body and brain and that regular use can disrupt the production of sex and growth hormones. They sensed that this biochemical process might explain the puzzling personality and behavioral changes in their children. The lethargy, irritability, loss of motivation and drive, and, in some of the boys, the deficient pubertal development were definitely more than just a phase.[1]

Feeling reinforced by credible medical information, the parent group decided to base a strict antidrug position in their families on a health hazard argument, according to which parents have the right and responsibility to protect their children's health. After some initial confusion and disagreement about their position on alcohol and tobacco, since both drugs were legal for adults and were used by some of the parents, the group concluded that alcohol and tobacco are supposed to be illegal for minors and that the health hazards and abuse potential for developing adolescents are serious. Despite differences in religion, politics, personalities, and social behavior among the parents in the group, they reached the unanimous position that adolescents should grow up free of all intoxicating or habituating drugs. After their children finished high school they could make their own decisions--and take on the responsibilities and the consequences of their choices.

But to transform "staying straight" back into the social norm the parents realized they faced an uphill struggle against the intoxication-oriented youth culture. They would have to change the adolescent battle cry of "everybody" to a manageable number of young people--the groups of kids who ran around together. Thus, the 40 or so parents devised a common behavioral code of age-appropriate privileges, curfews, limits, and responsibilities for the young peer group. Making a mutual commitment to keep in touch, share information, enforce their rules, and back each other up, the parents implemented their plan to counter the peer pressure to "get high" with stronger and better informed peer pressure from parents.

The rebuilding of parental influence and control was not easy. It was often tedious, frightening, and "embarrassing" (the universal reaction of the young people). But within 6 months all the parents who stuck with the plan knew they were once again

raising drug-free children--truly normal in their high spirits, open communication, and eager participation in family and school activities. They also recognized that many other parents would soon be learning about adolescent drug use the hard way, for they observed a new crop of younger kids moving into the partying scene during the winter holidays. As newly educated antidrug activists, the parent group committed themselves to sharing their hard-won knowledge with other parents. Thus, they called upon the local parent-teacher organization and the school to help plan a series of parent awareness meetings.[2]

As the group tried to expand their educational effort they were frequently frustrated by the apparent lack of concern and misinformation about youthful pot smoking that issued from the popular media. Radio and TV shows seemed increasingly to exaggerate the therapeutic usefulness of marijuana and to glamorize the stars and public figures who used it. By March 1977 much of the press was heralding the forthcoming Congressional hearings on decriminalization as proof that marijuana was harmless. The parents felt that public spokesmen were sending confusing messages to children. If the Atlanta family group was not to remain a lonely island in the tide of the drug culture, then parents who hoped to raise drug-free children needed more support from the media and the government.

While preparing informational packets for the Atlanta parents, one of the mothers, Marsha Manatt, had read an interview with Dr. Robert DuPont, then Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA).[3] DuPont stated his growing concerns about the negative health effects of marijuana and his frustrations, because of the confused legal situation, in getting that message clearly to the public. Manatt wrote him a long, personal letter in the vague hope that someone in the giant Federal bureaucracy might listen to a "mad Mom."

She described the shocking extent of marijuana use among sixth- through ninth-graders, the difficulty in finding relevant or up-to-date health information, and the steps the parent group took to reverse adolescent peer pressure. She urged more awareness at the Federal level of the effect that ambiguous public statements about adult marijuana use had on the impressionable juvenile audience.

When DuPont read the letter, it hit home. He was a parent too, and he worried about his own children's exposure to the drug culture. Immediately he telephoned representatives of the Atlanta group, praised them for their efforts, and asked for more information on how they had reversed the pro-pot peer pressure.

The positive response from NIDA to their project greatly reinforced the parents' commitment, and they arranged for DuPont to visit the community in May 1977. He first met alone with a group of children and then with adults invited to a parent awareness meeting at a local church. DuPont later recounted the unsettling effect the 12-to-14-year-old youngsters had on him. With high spirits, startling frankness, and a lot of giggling, they described a teenage social scene in which "everybody" got high right under the noses of naive parents and teachers. Surprisingly, none of the children blamed their parents for the partying scene; they even reluctantly conceded that their parents had genuine health concerns when they banded together to change that scene. But "everybody else" still said pot was harmless.

That night the parents also spoke frankly, but with more urgency, about their feelings that ambiguous governmental policies and uninformed media were undermining the ability of parents to protect their children from drugs. The parents emphasized that the marijuana issue should not be a matter of liberal versus conservative politics--it was a matter of public health. It should be dealt with seriously by nonpartisan policies that ensured the effective protection of minors.

DuPont was impressed by what the parents had been able to accomplish, and he wondered if similar efforts would work in other communities. This led to three important questions about the experience of the Atlanta parent group. First, was teenage use of marijuana as widespread in other areas as it had been in the affluent, university-centered Atlanta neighborhood? Second, would other parents and teenagers respond to accurate medical information about marijuana, or would they reject it as too technical or as scare tactics? Third, would a unified parental effort be effective with older teenagers, with less educated families, or with more fragmented families?

To seek answers to these questions Tom Adams, director of NIDA's Pyramid Project, put Marsha Manatt in touch with Dr. Thomas ("Buddy") Gleaton, a professor of health education at Georgia State University.* Adams knew that during Gleaton's 10 years of teaching drug education to teachers and counselors he had become increasingly frustrated by the apparent ineffectiveness of most school-based prevention programs. Gleaton was

*NIDA established the Pyramid Project in 1975 in order to provide information and technical assistance to State and local drug abuse prevention programs.

also interested in current marijuana research and had a teenage daughter himself. Through Gleaton's contacts in school systems all over Georgia, Adams hoped to test out the potential for replication of the parent group effort.

Dublin, Georgia

It was perhaps prophetic of growing parental concern about drug use that Gleaton did not have to seek out the next parent group. In October 1977 three mothers approached him at a teachers' workshop in Dublin, Georgia. Shocked by the PCP overdose of a popular teenager in the small rural community, the mothers had come to the educators' inservice day to try to learn something about drugs. When Gleaton spoke on current marijuana research and described how the Atlanta parent group had based their collective effort on a credible health position, the mothers came forward and volunteered to organize a similar project in Dublin. Gleaton advised them first to solicit cooperation from the schools and the media and then to plan a large community education meeting.

Walter Foy, principal of Dublin High School, was delighted when the parents approached him and offered to take on the responsibility of educating other parents in the community. Foy had been disturbed by the growing numbers of youngsters involved in drug use and the naivete and passivity of parents in the face of the epidemic. Thus, he courageously agreed to speak out in the local press about the extensiveness of the problem in the schools. The front-page news story headlined "Drugs: Dublin School Students Are No Strangers to Growing Problems" surprised and alarmed many residents.[4] Foy candidly acknowledged in the article that as many as 80 percent of junior and senior high school students had some contact with drugs. He noted that the use of marijuana was the biggest problem and that many students rode around in cars smoking it before coming to school in the morning. Foy spoke frankly to Dublin parents: "Parents need to know where their children are, who they're with, and when they're coming home whenever they go out... Education is a good thing, but the problem will not stop unless parents are more concerned."

In a followup story entitled "Pot-pourri" 17-year-old Jimmy, an ex-pot smoker in the community, explained why so few parents knew what was going on:

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> Some parents leave the kids on their own, the kids just come in, go to their rooms. They can say, "I had a rough day, we had a big test," or something like that. The parents don't notice... Also, you couldn't tell as much on somebody who smokes cigarettes... There's an unwritten code which condemns anyone who tells on anyone else, whether they're smoking or selling. (5)

The candor of school officials and the thorough media coverage ensured a big turnout when Gleaton brought an Atlanta parent leader to Dublin to help organize a community steering committee and to speak at a public meeting. The enthusiastic response to this meeting led the parent organizers to form Drug and Alcohol Prevention Advocates (DAPA), which planned a continuing series of meetings to alert more parents and children in the community. Importantly, the director of the county drug and alcohol unit, Frank Fields, welcomed the parent activism and supported it with his staff and facilities. But, as Fields acknowledges, the energy and imagination came primarily from the parents, who organized a variety of meetings and events, ranging from five parents in a housing project to a mass youth rally in the football stadium with all school marching bands participating.

With the formation of the Dublin parent project NIDA's three questions received positive answers. The marijuana epidemic was as extensive in a small rural community as in suburban Atlanta. Parents were hungry for sound scientific information on marijuana, and teenagers found it interesting and credible. Parents of different races, income levels, and educational backgrounds shared a common instinct to protect their youngsters from drugs. But first the parents had to become aware that the drug problem was real and widespread in their community. The relative invisibility of the actual marijuana usage--invisible, that is, to underinformed parents and educators--had made the drug problem seem abstract and distant to most of the public.

DeKalb Families in Action

When the arrogant greed of drug culture merchandizers led them to promote their wares in the form of colorfully designed and slickly packaged gadgets and toys for using drugs, the drug problem was transformed from an imaginary dragon off somewhere else to a toad hunkering in one's own neighborhood. In fall of 1977, in many Atlanta suburbs that had been confident that drugs were other people's problems, dozens of shops began selling space-gun marijuana smokers, toy cocaine kits, "practice grass"

sets, Quaalude candies, and LSD comic books. The illicit drug culture brazenly advertised its assumption that it had indeed become the all-American, mainstream culture. But paraphernalia was soon to become a rallying point for Atlanta parents, as they began to fight back against such an obvious threat to their children.

In November 1977 several parents in the Atlanta suburb of Stone Mountain discovered that an attractive new record store in the local shopping mall was displaying a wide range of marijuana and cocaine paraphernalia. They asked their local political representatives to join with them to protest such commercial promotion of illegal drug use. The legislators and parents then formed Families in Action of DeKalb County to educate the public about the commercialized drug culture and to devise legislative regulation of its activities.6 The group got bills passed in the Georgia legislature and influenced local zoning commissions to prohibit sales of drug paraphernalia. Sue Rusche, a graphic artist, and other parents gave "Bong Shows" (displays of youth-oriented drug paraphernalia) to meetings of school principals, school bus drivers, and PTAs. Mothers also wrote to various soft drink manufacturers alerting them to illegal violations of their trademarks through the conversion of popular soft drink cans into "stash cans" to conceal drugs. One company, Coca Cola, investigated and successfully sued the stash can manufacturers. The overreaching greed of the drug culture had finally succeeded in making the invisible epidemic as obvious as the show window and display counter.

The First Southeast Drug Conference

With three different types of parent groups in Georgia going strong--a parent peer group based on the children's friendship circle; a community-school education project; and a community legislative action group--Buddy Gleaton decided for the first time to aim the annual Georgia State University Southeast Drug Conference, which he directed, toward ordinary parents. The conference, to be held in May 1978, would focus on new marijuana research, on the "do drug" messages in the popular culture, and on the formation of parent groups. Adopting the theme "The Family Versus the Drug Culture," Gleaton and his parent volunteers crossed their fingers and hoped that enough parents would come to pay the postage bills.

Despite a low turnout at the conference, several dozen parents and teachers responded strongly to the new scientific information that could arm them with an effective countermes-

sage to the drug merchandizers. Two of the workshops, run by parents from Dublin and DeKalb County, clearly established that informed parents could mobilize themselves into an effective prevention force and that it was urgent that they do so. Already evidence of the success of the parent groups was beginning to accumulate. DAPA president Peggy Nelson reported that attitudes among Dublin teenagers had begun to change within the first 6 months of the DAPA effort. (Later a countywide survey revealed even more promising news. Within a 3-year period drug use by Dublin students declined to a point where only 33 percent of the teenagers surveyed had ever tried marijuana).[7] Sue Rusche reported that Families in Action had received requests from many other States for their model paraphernalia legislation.

Unified Parents and Northside High School

In April 1978, when principal Bill Rudolph of Northside High School received the brochure for the "Family Versus the Drug Culture" conference, he wondered if any seminar could really penetrate the wall of parental ignorance and denial about the true extent of teenage drug, drinking, and discipline problems. But he knew he could get nowhere with his plans to raise educational and behavioral standards at Northside if the community remained unaware of the negative effect on teenagers of the hedonistic popular culture.

Sixteen months earlier, when he arrived as new principal at Northside, Rudolph looked forward eagerly to the challenges the school presented. Located in a wealthy Atlanta neighborhood, Northside had a reputation as a good school with a great diversity of students. Academic achievement ranged from near-illiterates to ninth-graders who read on a university level. As a magnet school with a large busing program, Northside reflected the racial makeup of Atlanta--a 50-50 black-white ratio, with a rich variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds. As Rudolph notes, "We had everybody from Baptists to Buddhists, atheists to warlocks." The school was viewed by many as a model of successful integration, and it had a loyal core of parent supporters committed to maintaining the central city's public school system, despite "white flight" to the suburbs, competitive private schools, and changing demographics.

But, despite its good reputation, Northside also reflected many of the social changes of the '60s, for better or worse. Rudolph was dismayed by the sense of drift and carelessness as students wandered through halls and parking lots and scattered litter on

the manicured grounds. In the cafeteria only about 200 of the 1,400 students ate school lunches, as students drove away to eat off campus--and often remained off campus for the afternoon. Teachers and staff seemed demoralized and frustrated, as though few students really cared about what they learned. Many bright students were opting for the easy courses among the smorgasbord of electives spread before them. As in other top-ranked schools, normative achievement tests and SATs revealed that students were not achieving at their highest potential. This "mediocratization of excellence" particularly bothered Rudolph, for he knew that there were many fine minds in his student body.

But what shocked him most was the widespread, open use of marijuana, which often filled the halls and restrooms with clouds of pungent smoke. His own attitude about marijuana was ambivalent. In the 1950s his mother assured him that marijuana led immediately to "heroin, madness, and suicide." In the 1960s he "began to doubt Mom" when his college friends smoked it and seemed to survive. But he knew marijuana was illegal and that a school should never be a safe haven for lawbreakers. So he enforced the law in every case of dealing or possession. During his first day at school he called the police to arrest two ninth-graders who were smoking pot on the front steps. Within his first year there had been almost weekly arrests, including many children of prominent citizens. More and more parents came to his office, feeling angry, confused, and hopeless about a problem they couldn't understand. Rudolph had little advice to offer them except to take their child to a physician. But he was discouraged when he learned that a pediatrician had expressed a permissive attitude toward marijuana use to the students.

By May 1978 Rudolph halfheartedly hoped that the drug conference might achieve its announced aim of "parent awareness and parent action." Thus, he asked the PTSA to send two parents along with the school counselor. Laughing about it 4 years later, Rudolph says he had no idea of what he had unleashed. Northside High School was launched on an adventure.

A Parent Peer Group. When the Northside Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) asked Dorothy Fisk* to attend the drug conference, she was grateful. In her work as a school nurse at a middle school she had observed several pre-teen pot smokers, and she was increasingly distressed by the heavy pot smoking of her 16-year-old son. Principal Rudolph had had him arrested earlier in the year, but the court-appointed drug

*Not her real name.

counselor told the boy that pot smoking was OK--"just don't get caught again." As Rudolph later observed, "Mrs. Fisk's innate motherhood told her not to give up, but with the counselor telling her to get off the kid's back, she and her husband had become confused and inconsistent." Thus, it was with a sense of relief that the Fisks heard speakers at the conference tell parents they had every right to worry about the use of any psychoactive drugs, especially illegal drugs, by their children. Despite the messages of futility that they'd heard earlier--"It's too late by the time a kid's 15"--the couple left the conference determined to regain a drug-free son.

The Northside PTSA also asked Judy Kiely to attend the conference. She was interested because of her work in family counseling as a religious educator. In raising five children she and her husband had worked hard to instill self-discipline and high expectations within their family. But, with their youngest son at Northside, they sensed that high school in 1978 was not the lively, productive, and maturing experience it had been for their older children. It was with a dawning sense of recognition that she listened to the speakers at the conference as they described the malaise and drift associated with the teenage partying scene. The complex of symptoms produced by adolescent marijuana use (loss of motivation, lethargy, withdrawal from the family, secretiveness, and dishonesty) echoed complaints and questions she was hearing from more and more parents--especially the parents of her son's best friends. When she saw the displays of bongs, pipes, and spoons and the endless variety of stash cans for concealing drugs, she became angry and worried. Just how bad was the situation for her child, his friends, and their community?

Following the advice of the first parent groups, Judy Kiely and Dorothy Fisk began calling the parents of their sons' friends. They told them what they had learned at the conference and invited them to get together at the local library. At first only four parents showed up. Slowly easing into a frank assessment of the drug and alcohol problem among their children and gradually sharing their questions and worries, the small group gained a sense of relief and confidence that each family was not alone. As they continued to meet at the library every Saturday morning, their numbers grew to ten families, including all the fathers, with only two parents of the peer group refusing to participate. By pooling their information, they learned that all the boys in their children's peer group had experimented with pot and that several were heavy users. Two had already been arrested for drug use at school. Most disturbing to the parents, though, was that every student they talked to, user or nonuser, condoned the illegal use of drugs and alcohol.

Deciding to draw up a plan to change those attitudes, the Northside parents invited a parent from the first Atlanta group to share their experiences with younger children. The parents knew that it would be much harder to change the behavior of 15- to 17-year-old boys, especially because of the difficulty of supervision when they had easy access to cars and parties were scattered all over the community. But, as one father said, "We really had no choice, once we realized the hazards of our sons' continuing drug and alcohol use. We only had a year or so left before they reached legal age, and none of them seemed to be maturing sufficiently towards that kind of responsibility and independence."

The parents all agreed to read with their kids a physician's paper on marijuana, which would provide the rationale for new family rules. Then they defined the essential areas of risk: unsupervised parties, loosely supervised parties, cruising around in cars, lunches away from school, late night hours, and truancy. They also designed a set of rules to minimize these opportunities for drug and alcohol use:

- o No smoking or drinking by teenagers under 18 in the house or car;
- o 10:00 p.m. summer curfew weeknights; midnight curfew on Saturdays;
- o Parents call to check on whereabouts of teenagers;
- o Parents greet teenagers when they come into the house.

The rules were immediately typed, signed by all the parents, and then posted at home. The battle was on.

The kids were furious about this display of parent power. "After all," one father observed, "they'd been running circles around us for several years." But the parents stuck together, and each Saturday meeting brought new tales of groundings, withdrawals of car and telephone privileges, or runaways. The biggest uproar came over the curfew, which the teenagers considered an "infringement of the Bill of Rights." One mother reported that her son argued so much about the curfew that she almost gave in. The main thing that stopped her, she said, was that she wouldn't be able to face the other parents at the next Saturday meeting. "We parents need some peer pressure too," she laughed, "when we begin to buckle too easily." When another parent began to worry about his son's complaints that the rules were too "undemocratic," the group decided to hold a friendly potluck supper with the teenagers to discuss matters. This premature meeting turned out to be a fiasco, for the parents became divided and the teenagers unified as they wrangled and

argued. One mother recalled that "many long-hidden words were said that night" in a verbal free-for-all.

Eventually the parents realized why their teenagers disliked the parent group so much and resented other parents' "poking their noses into everybody's business"--it was because the unified parental effort was working. The parents renewed their commitment to holding firm and began making plans for more projects with their kids. There were bowling nights with fathers and sons. Another potluck supper was held, but this time it was carefully orchestrated to avoid a standoff between parents and teenagers. Brothers and sisters were invited too, but no kids sat with their own parents at the many small tables. This time the young people enjoyed the frank discussions, and several parents "fell in love" with teenagers from families other than their own. Subsequently, some parents took a course in family communication skills to learn how to avoid blowups and fruitless arguments.

About 4 months after the group's first meeting, the parents realized that their family relationships were becoming healthier and stronger. Increasingly, the no man's land between parental awareness and the youth culture was being filled by PAK--the acronym the group adopted for "Parents and Kids." Many of the fathers in particular felt revitalized by the positive breakthroughs in their relationships with their sons. They had found the open sharing of feelings and concerns within the group a new and gratifying experience.

As summer drew to a close, one boy asked plaintively at a PAK meeting, "All right, what if you do get us to change? What about all the others at school? Don't you know it's an overwhelming tide out there?" Like the first Atlanta parent group, the Northside parents felt an urgent sense of commitment to share their information and experiences with more parents. They knew their work was far from being over.

PTSA Special Committee on Drug Awareness. Judy Kiely had already asked Principal Rudolph and the PTSA to sponsor a series of parent awareness meetings during the summer. Rudolph was pleased by the parent interest, but he did not want to be in charge. He would open the school and give the meetings his blessing, but he sensed that it was critical that this project be initiated and sustained by parents. The PTSA established a special committee on drug awareness that sponsored the meetings, and the PAK parents organized the programs and mailed out announcements to parents at public and private

schools in the area. One of the parents, Marilyn Benveniste, designed flyers with catchy openers:

> "When is a roach not a bug?"
> "What if I'm doing the laundry and find a joint in my child's bluejeans?"
> "Parents, is marijuana changing your teenagers? Is your student's interest in learning declining? Are you worried about your student's unsupervised activities? Many parents are concerned and are taking action."

The meetings, held every Monday night during the summer, drew in families from all over the community. Physicians and nurses, law enforcement and juvenile court workers, and media representatives were invited to share their expertise and concerns. By late July the PTSA special committee had drawn up its goals for the coming school year. Adopting a nonblaming policy, the parents pledged to work with the school, the juvenile court, and the medical community to reduce illegal drug and alcohol use among local teenagers. Recognizing that more effective parental supervision was the key to attaining these goals, the committee also developed "Suggested Guidelines for Parents and Teens," which were mailed out to all families.* With a well publicized definition of behavioral rules for students and supervision guidelines for parents, the parents felt a growing sense of collective backbone.

How to Turn A School Around

When the drug awareness committee met with Principal Rudolph in early August, he was impressed by the solid groundwork they had prepared for an all-out effort within the school. The parents requested a drug education inservice day for teachers, a new school behavior code, the closing of the campus, and a survey of teachers to learn where they could use volunteer help from parents. As Rudolph recalls, "I couldn't say no to them. The parents did not come in accusing me or blaming the school. They said, 'We, as a community, have a drug problem, and we want to help the school in its efforts with our children.'"

For Rudolph, dealing with the drug problem was the opening wedge in tackling many broader educational and attitudinal problems at the school. "Drugs alarmed the parents enough to mobilize them to address a lot of other issues with their children and the community," he observed. "For me, the process came

*See appendix A for the complete statement of goals, objectives, and guidelines.

under the umbrella of making fundamental philosophical changes in the way we ran the school. I hoped to raise student and faculty ambitions for higher educational standards--to regain that 'glow of excellence' that once distinguished Northside. I also wanted to rebuild an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy in the relations between students and staff."

In order to inform the faculty about new marijuana research and make clear that the administration and parents were seriously concerned about juvenile drug and alcohol use, a teacher's workshop was held the week before school started. Followup workshops were used to develop clear and practical procedures for handling drug and alcohol offenses. Rudolph did not feel that teachers should have to be law enforcers or accusers. Instead, they should send all suspected cases to the principal or an assistant principal. If drug use was suspected but not proven, the principal would generally question the student, occasionally conduct a search, and always call the parents in for a conference. He would discuss the symptomatic behavior, give the family some updated reading materials, and urge the parents to join the PTA effort to change the prodrug peer pressure. If the student had committed an offense requiring suspension, the principal could refuse to allow the teenager back until the parents and student had sought help through counseling or a peer support group.

If drug possession or dealing were proven, Rudolph called the police--on every offense. At each opening "Parents' Night" the principal reiterated to parents and students the school's position. When one new father asked what Rudolph did if he caught a student smoking dope, the principal answered, "I make two phone calls and the second one is to the parents. Illegal drug offenses do not lead to detention hall but to court." Through the continuing efforts of the parent meetings, a good working relationship was developed with the local police and juvenile court judge. The court's mandate could be used to get parents and the young offender into a constructive education and intervention process. Dr. Robert Margolis, a psychologist who ran a drug treatment program, volunteered to help the parents develop a model diversion process.[8] Through school or court referral, the process required the family to complete an educational program and the drug offender to maintain clean urine or blood drug screens for a probationary period.* Rudolph sums up, "As principal, I now have a lot of options to offer parents when their child gets in trouble. With the clout of school suspension or a court mandate, I can demand some kind of

*The program is presently implemented privately.

constructive action by the family and know that there is good help available for them. We've come a long way since the days when all I could do was send a weeping mother and defiant kid to a counselor who sided with the kid's delinquency and pulled the rug out from under the parents."

After three more teacher workshops, which drew on the medical expertise of local physicians who had joined the parent organization, Rudolph asked the science department to develop a new curriculum on drugs. "We didn't want illegal drug use to be taught as a matter of sociological choice," Rudolph says. "We wanted a tough and demanding course on the physiological facts about drugs." Drug education became a required component of ninth-grade biology classes. Thus, at home and at school, Northside students were hearing a credible biological basis for their elders' "nonnegotiable position on drugs."

What have been the results of this hard-line policy? In 1977 Rudolph had to call in the police on almost a weekly basis to deal with drug-related incidents. During the 1980 school year there were only three incidents; in 1982, only one. Interviews with students revealed that most of them liked the school's position: "It's tough, but it's fair," they said. "They bust 'em, but they also try to help 'em."

To tighten the discipline in other areas within the school, Rudolph and a faculty committee rewrote the school handbook. To avoid semantic arguments, all procedures were reduced to clear, simple rules, and a letter was sent home to all parents notifying them that school rules would be rigorously enforced. The PTSA called for full parental support. Then, using parent volunteers, the administration began to monitor tardies, an important indicator of student attitudes toward school. With 1,400 students and seven class changes, there were nearly 10,000 opportunities to be tardy each day. The committee was shocked to learn that students were averaging 5,000 tardies a day. "No wonder the school looked like Grand Central Station!" exclaimed one dismayed parent.

To get the message clearly to students that they were expected to be in class on time, a detention hall was established. Teachers automatically sent any tardy student to detention for the class period. At first detention hall had to be held in the school auditorium, and hundreds of complaining students were marched in. When one mother explained that she overslept and offered to sit in detention for her son, Rudolph cheerfully advised her to get a new alarm clock and sent the boy off to the hall. For other behavioral problems teachers referred students

to the administrators, who could send them to detention for longer periods of time. Rudolph admits that detention hall is "educationally unsound and pedagogically perverted"; but, more importantly, it works. "The students hate it," he chuckles, and he answers their complaints by pointing out that "detention hall is a nonissue for those who don't get sent there." By the end of the first year tardies had dropped from 5,000 a day to about 50. By the second year disruptive or rude behavior had dropped so much that detention hall was moved to a classroom where some 30 or 40 students may be "coolin' their heads and hushin' their mouths" or wishing they'd gotten to class on time.

As the year went on, parents Joyce White and Rosellen Amisano merged the drug awareness and volunteer committees and worked to place parent volunteers as helpers in the school clinic and library. Especially important was the volunteers' assistance with the increased clerical work that resulted from attendance monitoring. Every day volunteers telephoned the parents of every child who was not in school. Also, a telephone network was developed that enabled volunteers making five calls each to reach all 1,400 parents for important news or announcements. Charts listing the names of parent volunteers were posted in the halls so that students had a clear sense that many parents were involved. As one mother said, "Last year, it got to the point where I didn't know if my son was even at the school. Now, he doesn't know from day to day if I'm at the school."

With drug use, tardiness, and truancy steadily decreasing, Rudolph's positive ambitions for the academic program began to take hold. Parents were required to participate in the academic counseling sessions when students chose their curriculum. Reiterating Northside's philosophy of "maximum achievement through hard work," the advisors urged the families to choose the maximum academic load. In 1977 less than 10 percent of the student body took the heaviest academic load; by 1981 more than 80 percent were taking full loads during the entire 4 years. A newly demanding senior year with a full day of classes solved the growing problem of "senioritis"--the sense of drift and uselessness that seniors used to have when they had few classes and spent most of the day "goofing off." Progress reports on academic and behavioral measures were sent home every 3 weeks, and parents had to come to PTSA meetings or the office to pick up final report cards. This steady school-home contact provided opportunities for parents to meet teachers and to devise constructive remedial work where necessary.

What were the results of this tighter academic structure and increased parent involvement in raising academic achievement? Over a 4-year period (1978-1982):

- o Scores on SAT's rose 50 points in verbal ability and 10 points in math ability;
- o Scores on normative achievement tests (reading, math, and composition) rose steadily across the board for all ethnic and socioeconomic groups; the school's average went from below the national norm to above the national norm;
- o There was a 15-30-percent increase in all academic courses, at the expense of less demanding electives; a 300-percent increase in physics classes; a 100-percent increase in chemistry and advanced math enrollment; and a 25-percent increase in foreign languages.

To make Northside a lively and fun focus of teenage activities, parents and students were also urged to participate in sports, clubs, performances, and competitions. With students coming from 52 different neighborhoods in Atlanta, school-sponsored events were the only hope of making a truly cohesive community out of the student body. In 1977 Northside barely fielded a football team--only 25 students tried out. In 1981 more than 100 students tried out and the school ran out of uniforms. Participation in all sports, especially intramurals, greatly increased. The numbers of parents who joined sports booster clubs and who attended the games rose dramatically. Membership in the foreign language clubs, science clubs, and leadership societies grew so much that classrooms couldn't contain them.

Symptomatic of the new school spirit, the 1981 senior prom was a gala success, with over 400 students attending--and staying for the whole evening. Rudolph laughs at the contrast with the 1977 prom, when only two students showed up and to greet the drooping sponsors--the band, chaperones, student officers, and principal, all of whom were required to attend. "If the kids' partying scene routinely includes booze and drugs, then school-sponsored functions can't compete with keggers and pot parties. Those kids who did attend straight parties were made to feel like jerks or Goody-Two-Shoes. But when Northside parents took better charge of their teenagers' social life and cleaned up their act, then the teenagers flocked back to the traditional social activities."[9]

Perhaps the greatest tribute to the capacity for hard work and the exuberant joy of healthy, drug-free teenagers came in May 1982, when Northside's School of the Performing Arts was given the National Rockefeller Award for Excellence in the Arts. Northside was the only high school in the country to receive such a tribute. To celebrate the occasion 400 students gave a highly acclaimed performance of Leonard Bernstein's "Mass" before a V.I.P. audience of civil rights and civic leaders.[10]

In presenting the award to director Billy Densmore, David Rockefeller affirmed that "the arts are the bearers of both pleasure and discipline." For principal Bill Rudolph, remembering his first week at Northside, when some undisciplined students in the performing arts theater got their pleasure from blowing marijuana smoke through the school's ventilation system, it was a proud moment. For the parents and students of a once-troubled public school, it was a magic moment.

Unified Parents, Inc.

By September 1978 the Northside parent movement had outgrown living room, library, and school and mushroomed into Unified Parents of America, Inc. Using a local church hall, Unified Parents held a large educational meeting every 3 months and planning and evaluation meetings in the months preceding and following it.

Judy Kiely, president of Unified Parents, organized the educational meetings into brief informational sessions led by experts (on the medical effects of drugs, the juvenile justice system and related issues) and then small discussion groups led by parents. Hundreds of parents from many school systems attended these meetings. Among them was Dr. Brown Dennis, an Atlanta endocrinologist, who joined Unified Parents and offered to develop better liaison with the medical community. Dennis arranged for three mothers in the group to speak to the medical staff of Piedmont Hospital about the growing need of families for guidance, education, and diagnostic intervention by practicing physicians. The 75 doctors were responsive, and soon other hospitals and clinics scheduled similar programs. In May 1979 Brown Dennis devoted an entire issue of Atlanta Medicine, the journal of the county medical society, to the topic "Adolescent Drug Abuse." Reprints of the issues, which featured an update on research and practical steps that parents and schools could take, became a major resource for parent groups in Atlanta.[11]

At the same time that Dr. Dennis was bringing the parents' message to physicians, psychologist Robert Margolis worked to provide updated research information and a change in attitude in the counseling professions. Principal Rudolph had complained to him that many in the counseling community had abdicated their responsibilities, both to the law and to the family, when they condoned or trivialized illegal drug use by juveniles. Thus, Margolis worked with the Georgia Psychological Association to develop a new position paper on adolescent marijuana use. The

publication of this well researched document helped to eliminate "responsible use" as a bitter source of confrontation between parents and professionals.[12] "Growing up drug-free" became the goal advocated by more and more professionals, as well as parents and kids.

The importance of this developing consensus was illustrated poignantly by a letter from a mother to Unified Parents:

> I would like to thank the Unified Parents Organization for being the resource that provided our family with immediate and necessary help when we needed it recently for our 17-year-old son.
>
> After enjoying this boy, who had always been bright, articulate and an able student, we began in August to notice alarming symptoms. In the space of three weeks in September, he ran away, wrecked our car, and was found in a disoriented state some 7 hours after we expected him home. A week later he was suspended from school. In addition, he began to distort the truth and was stealing money from us and his brother whenever he could. On several occasions, we found marijuana in his room, in his pockets, and hidden on our property.
>
> We also found that positive help was very difficult to find. Our pediatrician referred us to a psychiatrist who told us, in effect, that the pot problem was not important.
>
> Over and over again, we heard from parents and professionals alike, "There's nothing you can do."
>
> Finally, during the Christmas holidays, we found our son passed out on the road and we rushed him to the hospital.
>
> Following all of this the psychiatrist said that our son was no longer his responsibility.
>
> Because of a newspaper article I had read concerning a meeting of Unified Parents, I began to track down people involved in this organization. For the first time, I talked with people who listened, who understood, and moreover, who cared. Inside of six hours, these individuals had put me in touch with someone who has at least agreed to try, in the eleven

weeks that we have left before our son is 18, to work with him and with us.

You cannot know how appreciative our family is for this help, especially since we don't even live in your community. We urge you to continue this work you have begun. There are many parents floundering with problems similar to ours.

Grateful Sandy Springs parents

Exhilarated by what they were accomplishing, leaders of Unified Parents urged Buddy Gleaton to hold 1-day workshops for parent-school teams from all over Atlanta. In fall 1979 Northside parents worked with Gleaton's PRIDE program (Parent Resources Institute for Drug Education) to develop training seminars for 5-7-person teams from schools, PTAs, civic clubs, and religious organizations. Each team would develop an action plan for its community and then report back at the end of the year about its progress. Within 3 years, the PRIDE miniconferences, run almost entirely by volunteers on shoestring budgets, had expanded to serve 2,500 Georgia parents and 500 schools and organizations. By 1982, teams from Alabama, Florida, and Texas had also attended.

One service organization that attended the PRIDE conferences, the Junior League of Atlanta, went on to develop the GATE project (Gain Awareness Through Education), a drug awareness program for parents and students in grades 4-8. Within 3 years League-trained speakers had presented 130 programs to over 5,000 adults and 15,000 children. By January 1982, GATE director Valerie Love reported that interest in the League's project had grown so much that the Atlanta chapter hosted representatives from 40 cities in 20 States to familiarize them with the GATE project and to help them start their own programs.[13]

Gwinnett County PRIDE Project

By summer 1980 the challenge to reach larger numbers of parents in Georgia had become urgent. Drug trafficking in the State had expanded rapidly--particularly the flow of marijuana, cocaine, and Quaaludes from South America through Atlanta's international airport and rural airstrips around the State. Despite the hard work and success stories of many parent groups and schools, Buddy Gleaton was concerned that purely volunteer efforts would eventually burn out because of the "fatigue,

expense, and time away from the family that eventually became a burden to parent leaders." He sensed that some method of building in continuity, replenishment of volunteers, and ongoing cooperation with the schools was needed for the "long haul" of the parent movement.

Thus, Gleaton was excited when he got a call in August 1980 from Dr. Alton Crews, Superintendent of the Gwinnett County schools, who asked for assistance in designing a large-scale, long-term parent education project. A mixed suburban-rural community on the outskirts of Atlanta, Gwinnett County is the fastest growing county in Georgia. As a school administrator for nearly 20 years, Crews had initiated and supported an endless variety of drug education programs in the schools--"ranging from the factual to the flaky." But as Crews observed, "Every year I go before the county grand jury and hear the same question: 'What's being done about the drug problem in the schools?' As much as I would like to tell them there is a decline in drug use, I can't. I can tell them what we're doing, but I can't tell them it's working." Nevertheless, Crews continued to speak out publicly and forcefully about his belief that drugs are the most serious threat to the nation's health, productivity, and security--"Drug use prevents young people from developing will power and self-discipline, qualities of citizenship which are essential to the viable functioning of democracy." As a father of teenagers himself, Crews sensed that the missing ingredient in the schools' drug abuse prevention effort was parent involvement.

Crews and Gleaton got together and in 2 hours designed a systemwide parent education project. Two weeks later Crews presented an update on "Youth and Drugs" to the Gwinnett County PTA Council and proposed a massive educational program that would target the 30,000 parents of students in 43 schools. As Crews observed, "In the past we in the schools have been berated by parents who ask what we're doing to stop drugs. Now we want to establish an alliance." The PTA made a 5-year general commitment to the project--with each school's participation voluntary--and agreed to provide the initial funding for workshops. In September the project was presented to all school administrators, and Crews asked for voluntary compliance. In November every school sent a team comprised of parents and educators to a drug awareness workshop to introduce the 5-year project. Thirty-one PTAs volunteered to join, and seven more teams joined in 1981-82.

The Gwinnett PRIDE Project is based on a series of workshops that train parent team captains in speaking and organizational methods. Also provided are films, slide presentations, and

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printed materials that can be used with audiences of various sizes. The team captains lead general awareness meetings for PTA or community groups and then recruit parent leaders from homerooms or grade levels who are trained to present guidelines for parent peer groups, parent-child interaction, and neighborhood action plans to small meetings of parents. Coffees in private homes, classroom meetings, swim club meetings, and homeowner's association gatherings have all been used to reach out to more parents.

The PTA and administration sponsored a systemwide survey of students in grades 6-12 to gather data both on the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, and on behavior and attitudes. The survey, which will be repeated periodically during the 5-year project, will be the first in the country to measure the impact of parent education and involvement on drug use by juveniles. With participation voluntary, 15,000 of 18,000 students cooperated in the first survey (nearly 2,000 seniors did not). The results were published in the county newspapers, and many citizens were shocked.[14]

Although Gwinnett County is strong church country and has a larger than national average of high school seniors who never use alcohol or drugs, the survey found that experimentation with marijuana was still a majority phenomenon (53 percent) and pill usage was alarmingly high. Enough youngsters were seriously involved with drugs to explain much of the discipline and delinquency problems that Gwinnett County educators experienced. Although some principals and PTAs denied that their schools had a problem, drug usage differed less than 2 percent from school to school. Rather than being used to point fingers at schools or communities, however, the survey was developed to gather baseline data to measure the effectiveness of the parent education project and to retarget curriculum units at critical grade levels.

By the end of the first year, Gwinnett County teams had contacted nearly 15,000 parents and were working on new ideas to reach more elementary school parents and to bolster the courage of high school parents. As one team captain observed, "In some elementary schools the parents feel that PRIDE is not needed because the children are too young. Some high school parents feel that it's too late to begin a drug education project because the children are too old." All the team members decided that initially the middle schools were the most important targets. Leaders in the project emerged naturally out of the meetings, and a wide variety of business and professional backgrounds was represented. Mickey Glasco, a pharmacist and

father of two teenagers, became project director and wrote a drug information booklet for parents that the school system published. When Glasco mentioned at a community meeting that the program needed 15,000 more copies, the Gwinnett Daily News offered to publish the booklet as a serial. Many of the supplies have been donated by local newspapers and businesses. One team captain, an industrial security analyst, developed a "Parent Helper" service that allowed parents to send in any drug anonymously and have it analyzed.

Parents of school-age children are the first priority of the Gwinnett County effort, but the project will expand to other groups. Team leaders will present the drug information and survey data, as well as drug-related crime and economic statistics, to law enforcement personnel, lawyers, physicians, ministers, and journalists, and they will suggest a specific activity for each group to undertake. The Elks have funded a hotline number for anonymous tips to police, and PRIDE captains have worked with local Rotary chapters to hold drug awareness town meetings in the seven townships in the county. Also, the United Way has helped the school system develop a film for civic clubs and business groups to explain what the project aims to accomplish over the next 5 years.

In the fall of 1981 Mickey Glasco, an unassuming neighborhood pharmacist, was given the prestigious "Liberty Bell" award by the State Bar Association for his "major effort toward promoting the system of justice under the law." What personal philosophy drives an ordinary citizen to take on such a job? Glasco cheerfully affirms, "The difficult we do immediately; the impossible takes a little longer."

* * * * *

At the first parent conference in May 1978 a speaker issued a "call to action" to Georgia parents:

> We Americans have never thought of ourselves as a helpless people--why should we feel any differently about illegal drug usage? Parents may be terrified into passivity, into willful self-blindness, into bewildered permissiveness by the sense that drugs are something so alien, so mysterious, so overwhelming, that we, mere parents, cannot begin to cope with them. But drugs are not mysterious to kids. Parents should feel more confident that they can deal with them as they would with other concrete facts of life--with common sense, with self-confidence and

> self-respect, with firmly articulated and fairly enforced parental standards, and with a determined commitment not to let their children's growth be damaged by mind-altering, mood-changing chemicals. And parents will have a lot more fun and a lot closer sense of community if they carry this out in the company of other parents. In a time of powerful adolescent peer pressures, parents need peer pressure too. (15)

In April 1982, when more than 1,000 parents and teens from 40 States and four foreign countries participated in the fifth national PRIDE conference, Atlanta parents were proud of their role in initiating the statewide parent movement for drug-free youth. But the hard-working mothers and fathers were even prouder that thousands of other parents in every State in the Union had heeded the call to action.[16]

NOTES

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2. The preceding story is told in more detail in Marsha Manatt's Parents, Peers, and Pot (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1979).

3. Marihuana: a conversation with NIDA's Robert L. DuPont. Science, May 1976, pp. 647-49.

4. Dublin Courier Herald, Nov. 23, 1977.

5. Dublin Courier Herald, Dec. 13, 1977.

6. Rusche, S. How to Form a Families in Action Group in Your Community. Available from Families in Action, 3845 North Druid Hills Rd., Decatur, GA 30333.

7. Bachtel, D.C. "Highlights of a Drug Survey Conducted in Laurens County, Georgia." Dublin, GA: The author, May 1981.

8. Information on the LEAD diversion program may be obtained from Robert Margolis, Ph.D., Ridgeview Institute, 3995 South Cobb Drive, Smyrna, GA 30080.

9. See: Tunly, R. The school that went straight. Ladies' Home Journal, May 1982, pp. 79 ff. Condensed in Reader's Digest (1982).

10. Smith, [illegible]. Northside School works miracle with mass. Atlanta Journal- Constitution, May 4, 1982.

11. A combination edition of Atlanta Medicine that includes the Unified Parents volunteer project and school program can be ordered from Unified Parents, P.O. Box 27585, Atlanta, Georgia, 30327.

12. "Georgia Psychological Association: Policy Statement on Child and Adolescent Marijuana Use" (March 1981). Reprints available from Robert Margolis, Ph.D. Ridgeview Institute, 3995 S. Cobb Drive, S.E., Smyrna, GA 30080.

13. For information about GATE and other drug education programs, contact the Junior League office in your community (or the Atlanta Junior League, 3154 Northside Parkway, NW, Atlanta, GA 30327).

14. "Drug/Alcohol Use Survey." Gwinnett County Public Schools, Project PRIDE Student Survey, April 1981.

15. Manatt, M. "The Family Versus the Drug Culture." Keynote address, Southeast Drug Conference, Georgia State University, May 25, 1978.

16. The proceedings of these conferences, The National Parents' Movement for Drug-Free Youth: Highlights of the 1980-81 PRIDE Conferences, can be ordered from PRIDE, Georgia State University, Suite 1216, 100 Edgewood Ave. N.E., Atlanta, GA 30303.

CHAPTER TWO
FLORIDA INFORMED PARENTS—
A COURAGEOUS FAMILY SPEAKS OUT

It was a balmy evening in Naples, Florida in March 1978, as a group of friends gathered around candlelit tables for a street party. For the many retirees who had settled in the unspoiled seaside community in south Florida, Naples provided a serene and friendly setting that capped a lifetime of hard work. But for many parents who were trying to raise teenagers, the spring breezes belied the increasingly turbulent storms and rough seas of family life.

Although they chatted cheerfully with their friends at the party, Bill and Pat Barton were deeply and privately worried about changes in their 17-year-old son's personality and behavior. They suspected that he was smoking pot, but they didn't know if that was a factor in his increasing alienation from the family. Suddenly a friend interrupted the small talk and looked Pat right in the eye. "Do you know that your daughter is dating a drug dealer?" she asked. Pat felt as if she'd been kicked in the stomach. "Not Tracy," thought Bill, as images of his sunny, beautiful 16-year-old daughter flashed in his mind. Their friend confided that her own child was involved with drugs and that she was frightened about what was happening to the kids. Recovering from the blow, the Bartons thanked her for her frankness and vowed to confront their son and daughter when they got home.

"Yeah, Tracy's really going down the tubes," said Bret, for he was worried about his sister's daily pot smoking and increasing drug experimentation—and he didn't like her dealer boyfriend. But Bret assured his parents that he could handle marijuana—"It's no big deal; besides, everybody smokes it." A bright and articulate boy, Bret firmly believed that pot was harmless, and he could argue vociferously with his parents. But Bill and Pat Barton knew that something had changed their children. They sensed instinctively that it was marijuana.

When they began quietly to question other parents, they heard

similar stories of formerly exuberant, cheerful, and resilient teenagers who had become lethargic, sullen, and hostile. The Bartons decided to call parents from ten families to meet in Bill's office and share their observations and concerns. By the end of the first meeting all the parents were in a state of shock from their dawning recognition of the extensiveness and seriousness of the teenage drug situation. For many families in this sleepy gulfside paradise, home life had become a battleground.

Determined not to sweep the problem back under the rug, two fathers went to the school authorities and confronted them with the stories of easy, pervasive drug usage in the schools and blatant dealing in the school parking lots. But the schools had been struggling with the problem for years--without parental support. The implication that it was the school's problem made them defensive. Mainly, school officials really didn't know how many young people were involved or what they could do about it. They had been "burned" before by hostile and confused parents who hurled accusations and then disappeared.

Frustrated by what seemed to be a stonewalling reaction by the schools, the parents decided to force the issue out into the open. Thus, they asked the county sheriff to help gather evidence on the extent of the problem. The sheriff decided to send an undercover unit onto the campus. For 3 weeks a disguised police van was stationed in the high school parking lot and undercover agents took hundreds of photographs and films of drug-related incidents. The police then raided the school and arrested six students, including the Bartons' son. When the films were shown to the school administrators and parents, the adults were stunned by the casualness and carelessness of student drug use. The films showed kids leaning against the police van while they puffed on joints and ducking behind cars when adults passed by.

The resulting publicity on the high school "bust" generated a wave of public concern among parents and educators alike. But the teenagers grouped themselves into a defiant tribe--angry at their parents' intervention, arrogant in their defense of their "right" to smoke pot, and confident that they knew "all the dope on dope." As Pat Barton recalls, "The parents and schools had been forced to recognize how serious the drug problem was, but we couldn't get a handle on the marijuana issue. The kids were full of street knowledge and garbled facts from popular drug magazines, and we didn't have any information for a credible counterargument."

In the meantime Bret was suspended from school and missed out on graduation. Although he was on court-ordered probation, the

Bartons decided to concentrate on changing Tracy because her symptoms seemed more serious. Determined to remove her from the dangerous influence of the drug dealer, they maintained constant surveillance on her. They learned that there were few drug-free social events for Tracy to attend. The parents sheepishly realized that all those sunset-watching parties on the beach, which were held even on cloudy days, were covers for pot parties. "Pasture parties" were not nature outings but occasions to gather psilocybin mushrooms. Youngsters even boasted of playing sports while they were "luded out" (high on Quaaludes).

The Bartons took Tracy to a child psychiatrist but when the doctor supported the parents' monitoring, Tracy refused to go back. Tracy screamed that they didn't trust her. "No, we don't," Pat answered. Whenever the Bartons let up on the surveillance, Tracy went back to the "druggies." She ended up one night in the hospital after an overdose.

The Bartons were reluctant to send Tracy to local agencies because of reports of drug use among some staff and a permissive attitude toward adolescent drug use. At home, with their youngest son watching unhappily, there were arguments, runaways, and tears. Everyone was miserable. The Bartons felt under siege as they struggled for their daughter's health and safety. Their only comfort was the group of parents, which now included 15 families--all in varying degrees of disturbance over the drug issue.

Then, in late May, a Naples mother read an Associated Press article about the PRIDE drug conference for parents in Atlanta. She was struck by the focus on new marijuana research and the account of the parents' unified effort in reversing peer pressure. She called the Bartons, and they decided to contact the Atlanta parent group. "That was the beginning of my $300 phone bills," laughs Pat. In response to their request, the PRIDE office sent the Bartons a packet of medical articles on marijuana and copies of the conference speeches.

The Atlanta parents, who had experienced problems with several self-admitted pot-smoking reporters, warned the Naples group about how destructive any hostile media coverage could be and how important it would be to solicit support from the media and schools before they began their parent action. Thus, the Naples parents decided to spend the summer laying the groundwork and asked NIDA's Pyramid Project to send an Atlanta parent leader down in October for a 3-day community awareness program. Feeling relieved and invigorated by the medical information on marijuana, which reinforced their instinctive reactions to the

drug, they named their new organization Naples Informed Parents, or NIP--reflecting their determination to nip the drug epidemic in the bud. As Pat told her older son, "Maybe it's too late for you--I don't know. But there's no way we'll let this happen to your 9-year-old brother."

NIP parents spent the next 3 months gathering information and designing a communitywide education project. They investigated the behavior patterns and gathering places of kids who used drugs. They shopped for paraphernalia and drug promotional literature and saved the store receipts for exhibits at citizens meetings. They attended meetings of the high school Parent Advisory Committee and shared what they were learning.

Working with administrators and student leaders, the committee defined several areas in which school control and student behavior should be improved. First, to deter drug trafficking the campus was closed. All visitors had to go through the office, and trespassers were subject to arrest. Second, a new code of student conduct was developed. The committee noted that it was "well aware of the increase of lawlessness in our society in recent years," but it would not accept this social trend in the Naples school system. "Constructive discipline" and an "atmosphere of good order" were necessary for educational achievement. The new code clearly spelled out the rights and responsibilities of students within a wide range of behavior--including such controversial areas as abusive language, dress and grooming, and public displays of affection. The code went into effect in September 1978.[1]

In the meantime the struggle in the Barton home continued. Once when Tracy was allowed to go to a movie with a girlfriend, she went to the dealer's house instead--on a night the police decided to raid it. Tracy was arrested and probated in her parents' custody. Despairing, the Bartons sent her to a rehabilitation center in another town. But, the antiparent approach of the treatment program disturbed the Bartons and--surprisingly--it alienated Tracy. Despite the battles at home, Tracy loved her family and longed for a resolution of their conflicts. She ran away 3 times in 3 weeks. Determined to regain control of their family, the Bartons held a family conference and laid out a strict new regimen for Tracy and Bret. Crying and frightened, Tracy vowed to "get straight" on her own, within her own family.

The Bartons crossed their fingers and began to share with Tracy and her brothers the medical information they were gathering. As summer eased into fall, Tracy gradually became free of the

chemicals that had so darkened her sunny nature. Pat and Bill watched with grateful amazement as their daughter "came home" again--to her own true personality and to an affectionate relationship with her family. Bret, still a social pot smoker, watched the surprising changes in his sister from the sidelines.

In September parents from NIP arranged a meeting with heads of the local newspapers and radio and TV stations. They made sure their representatives had high credibility in the community, and they addressed the media executives as "fellow concerned citizens." The parents described the extensiveness of the drug problem among teenagers and the critical need for parents to become alerted and mobilized. They asked for media support of their project "to educate the parents of Collier County about the effects of drugs and alcohol on adolescent development." The media heads responded positively, and one newspaper even ran the full text of "The Family Versus The Drug Culture" speech on its front page as a kickoff to the PRIDE speaker's visit in October.

When the Bartons brought the Atlanta visitor to their home from the airport, they were greeted by a group of semi-curious, semi-hostile teenagers. Tracy and Bret were popular and admired by their peers, and their friends had been affected "for better or worse"--by their parents' struggle to keep them away from drugs. The kids wanted to know who this "outside agitator" was and what the Bartons were up to. An initially awkward discussion, with angry undertones, soon became a good-natured debate, as the visitor talked about some of the problems associated with chronic marijuana use--coughing, bronchitis, less resistance to disease and infections, and memory problems. The parents pointed out that the sallow complexion, thinness, and deficient muscle development they observed in many "burnt-out" boys seemed to parallel descriptions they were reading by various clinical observers. The teenagers countered with a "patriotic mythology of pot," the new panacea, that they had gleaned from glossy drug magazines, comic books, and rock radio stations. When the parents laughed about how dumb and "out to lunch" they had been about what was going on with the teenagers, the kids relaxed and exchanged stories of sneaking around and managing to get "high" in such improbable settings as church and camp.

The boys conceded nothing to the adults, however, and Bret left the meeting in disgust. Privately, many of them recognized in themselves or in friends the physical symptoms the visitor had described. But, most of all, the once cocky pot smokers went home and thought about the changes in Tracy--for she was

drug-free and bubbling with life and enthusiasm, while her drug-using friends drifted aimlessly in their increasing lethargy, moodiness, and alienation.

For 3 days the PRIDE speaker and the NIP parents made presentations to school administrators, mental health personnel, physicians, sheriff's department youth deputies, civic and service clubs, Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) officers, and students. For the educators and law officers especially, the research information on marijuana was critical in gaining their support for the NIP project. They too had felt frustrated for years by their lack of a credible scientific information about marijuana, despite their observations of its pivotal role in initiating youngsters into the drug culture. For the physicians, dealing with the drug issue became a matter of professional responsibility when it was approached as an issue of adolescent health. For the business groups, the display of drug paraphernalia and literature--all purchased in Naples--seemed almost a personal affront. As one parent recounts, "Those enthuiastic Naples boosters did not want such 'disgusting toys' sold in their stores!" The prestigious Naples Civic Association, composed mainly of senior citizens, was disturbed by the connection between youthful drug use and the vandalism, burglaries, and muggings that haunted the elderly. The senior citizens vowed to help NIP with financial support and backing for antiparaphernalia ordinances--"as a project for our grandchildren."

On the third night 300 parents from all over the county gathered in the Gulfview Middle School auditorium for an open community meeting. Many were surprised to see Bill Barton, a prominent citizen and outstanding engineer, come to the podium. What did he have to do with drug abuse? When Barton looked out over the large audience and thought about giving his first drug speech, he growled at his wife, standing off stage. At the last minute she and other mothers had insisted that he introduce the speaker--"so NIP wouldn't look like a bunch of hysterical housewives." But when he looked into the hundreds of parents' faces, he recalled the pain that his family had gone through and realized that many in the audience faced similar miseries. Barton began speaking slowly and deliberately. "We're ordinary Naples parents, with a solid 20-year marriage and three beautiful kids," he said. "Like most parents, we never expected drug abuse to affect our family. But let me tell you, fellow citizens, when it does, it hits you right between the eyes." Then Barton raised his fist in a dramatic blow to his forehead.

The spontaneous gesture electrified the audience, and mothers and fathers sat on the edges of their seats for the rest of the

speeches. At one point when the Atlanta parent was describing the fun and games atmosphere of kiddie drug experimentation, a young boy shouted through the window, "Everybody go get high!" A chorus of catcalls from youngsters outside startled the assembled parents. Bill Barton concluded the meeting by affirming, "Ladies and gentlemen, we are not helpless. But alone we face terrible odds in raising drug-free children. Together, we can re-create a drug-free culture for our children. Let us begin tonight." The applause was thunderous, as Naples parents responded to the Bartons' courage and candor. NIP would soon have over 500 active members. The Bartons would soon have a drug-free family.

The newspapers and TV and radio stations covered the project thoroughly--always capturing the special bluntness and wit of Naples parents as they spoke out. School board chairman and NIP organizer Gerri Kalvin asserted in an article headlined "Parents...Full Steam Ahead in Drug War":

> The whole bunch of us parents have sat on our cans a long time. As parents, we've abdicated our responsibilities, and never bothered to learn anything about drugs, so all our kids learn about them is from their peer groups. It's about time that we learn, so we deal with and prevent the problem. (2)

The article then listed the names and phone numbers of ten NIP parents for any residents who wanted information or help. Requests for literature and speakers began to pour in, and NIP turned to a unique Naples program for help in responding.

In 1974 Dallas Reach, a retired advertising executive, became concerned that most diseases of later age and shortening of the lifespan could be prevented by better health behavior in youth and middle age. Working with the Collier County Medical Society, Reach developed the Prevent-A-Care program, in which physicians go into classrooms and talk to children in grades 4-7 about negative nutritional and behavioral patterns that contribute to an unhealthy lifestyle. Using anecdotes and experiences from their own practices, the physicians made preventive education a vivid and fascinating experience for the youngsters.

NIP was delighted when Dallas Reach proposed marijuana education as a part of the popular and respected Prevent-A-Care program. Preparing the new drug component also helped many doctors update their own knowledge of marijuana and other street drugs. Eventually a procedure was established through

which any parent who wanted a NIP speaker or Prevent-A-Care physician to talk to a child's class could contact the teacher, who would make the arrangements through NIP.

Relying on the physicians to bring credibility to their educational effort with the younger children, NIP activists recognized that changing the attitudes of older teenagers and adults would be an uphill struggle in a State with a powerful drug trafficking apparatus and a high rate of usage among sophisticated young professionals and business people. Thus, Mary and Bill Peterson developed a program featuring visiting speakers--all experts in their fields--who maintained the intellectual stimulation and persuasiveness that was critical to NIP's ambitions. Significantly, most of the funding for these speakers was donated by local businesses and clubs, which provided lodging, food, and supplies. The Naples Daily News and Rotary Club offered to fund speakers, for they saw continuing education as critical to maintaining community commitment.

Meanwhile at Naples High School, scene of the catalytic drug "bust," an important transformation was taking place. Although students grumbled at first about the stringent new conduct code, they soon adjusted to the higher expectations of their parents and schools. Within the first year, daily attendance rose 10 percent (from 85 to 95 percent). Within 3 years, the percentage of students passing the State math exams rose from 79 percent to 92 percent. Incidents of drug use, disruptive behavior, and vandalism on campus decreased dramatically. As news spread of the strict enforcement of the code, a civil liberties lawyer came from Miami in September 1979 to stir up students to protest their loss of "Constitutional rights." But the lawyer was surprised by the positive attitude of the students toward the changes in the high school.[3]

Defenders of the strict rules in Collier County schools say they have revitalized the high school as a place of learning and that the students seem to thrive in the new atmosphere. In fact, students' major complaints have been about the lack of college-level courses and after-school dances, not the conduct code. Despite the legalistic criticism, parents and educators are standing firm by their own rights to maintain drug-free schools, full of well behaved and ambitious youngsters. Many seniors have commented that the younger kids seem to take real pride in their high school; in fact, notes one 17-year-old boy, "School is actually a lot more fun now, without all the hassles of drugs and disruptions."

Grateful for Bill Barton's courageous leadership in the antidrug

effort, Naples voted Barton "Citizen of the Year" in 1979. Even more gratifying to the Bartons was the knowledge that Bret, too, was on his way to a drug-free life. He had accepted his parents' challenge to move out on his own and rethink his attitudes about marijuana. Faced with the demands of work and a tight budget, Bret began cutting back on pot smoking and then stopped altogether. Feeling healthier and more clearheaded, he chose to stay straight.

As the Naples project received more publicity, the Bartons were increasingly called upon to tell their story to State and national policy makers. Lee Dogoloff, from the White House, visited Naples in August 1979 and was deeply moved by the parents' commitment to their chidren. He was also impressed by how much NIP had accomplished, and he sensed that their project could become a model for many other communities. Thus, Dogoloff asked the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to produce a film, "For Parents Only," which featured parents and teenagers around the country telling the true story of the Nation's marijuana epidemic.[4] In March 1980 Dogoloff premiered the film at a White House seminar on drug abuse for wives of U.S. Congressmen. After hearing an update on marijuana research, various community action plans, and especially the Bartons' personal story, many Congressional wives returned to their home districts determined to work for better drug legislation and to join the parent movement.

Meanwhile in Naples the community struggle against the multi-billion dollar drug industry was no picnic. It was often frustrating, occasionally funny, and sometimes dangerous. For example, when Pat Barton was invited to Dunedin, Florida, to help a group there organize, a bomb threat drove the audience out of the school auditorium. The parents were so determined to hear her that they lifted her onto the hood of a car in the parking lot, where she shouted her message to the assembled crowd, "You're not helpless." Laughing about it later, Pat noted that the TV coverage of a middle-aged housewife slipping and sliding on the hood of a car, lecturing on Delta-9-THC and fat solubility in the midst of a bomb scare, generated great publicity for the fledgling Dunedin parent group.

At another point a NIP mother lamented that they were running out of "good bong shows," which were always fun to exhibit at PTA and club meetings. NIP's efforts at outlawing paraphernalia in Collier County had grown to a statewide ban on paraphernalia. Marijuana space guns and cartoon cocaine sets were getting harder to find in shops, although they were still advertised

through mail-order catalogs. Showing that the drug culture never says die, though, a teeshirt shop opened down the street from the NIP office (and near a middle school) with show windows full of shirts proclaiming "Smoke Florida Seafood," "Save the Bales," and "A Day Without Dope is Like a Day Without Sunshine." One volunteer noted wryly, "Our bong shows soon had a whole new teeshirt component."

Despite NIP's growing credibility, the issue of "responsible use" continued to be a point of contention between parents and professionals. NIP members were especially concerned about a Miami Herald Sunday magazine article entitled "A Parent's Guide to Drugs."5 Without citing any recent research, the article minimized the health hazards of marijuana and even suggested that, unlike other drugs, marijuana should be considered innocent until proven guilty. Most disturbing, though, were quotes from professionals who condoned the "nonabusive" use of drugs by children. A counselor from a drug information center asserted that "Use becomes abuse when it becomes problematic. If school and other aspects of the kid's life are in order, then drug use isn't a problem." NIP parents were concerned that the information, which would be read by thousands of parents, was outdated and that the illegality of drug use, especially by minors, was ignored. "You can't teach a child how to use an illegal drug responsibly any more than you can teach him to shoplift responsibly," scoffed one father.

NIP gained an important new ally in their argument in Ron Meserve, the new director of the county mental health clinic. As a parent, Meserve agreed with NIP's position--"Young people should grow up drug-free, period." As clinic director, he recognized that drug abuse professionals must be good role models for clients and, particularly, they must obey the drug laws. Thus, he issued a policy statement making the use of any illegal drug by staff grounds for immediate dismissal. With the air cleared, Meserve's professional staff became an important resource for Parents in Crisis, the parent support group initiated by NIP for families in the throes of the drug ordeal.

By early 1980 NIP parents were heartened by the dramatic changes in their own children and by the inspiring transformation in student attitudes and behavior at the high school. But they were increasingly disturbed by the failure of the Nation as a whole to recognize the seriousness of the drug invasion, in which south Florida was only the first line of defense for the country's children. Thus, they committed themselves to speak out in the national media regardless of the pain and embarassment it might cause their own families.

In January 1980 Peggy Mann, a popular journalist, published a major story on "The Parent War Against Pot" in the Washington Post. With pictures of the whole family--handsome, smiling, and "normal"--the Bartons' nightmare and struggle was sent out through the national press. Then the family was featured on the "Today Show," where their heartfelt story generated over 500 letters to NIP from parents and kids suffering through the same experience. NIP volunteers gathered in a church and wrote personal replies to every letter, urging other parents to organize and join the parent movement.

At Naples High School, 2½ years after the drug bust, many of the students were incensed that the "Today Show" show seemed to imply that the school was still a "druggie haven." They were proud of the changes in the school--and in themselves--and they wanted the good story told. School administrators praised the Bartons for their honesty and didn't worry about the TV image of Naples' schools. Administrator Tom Morris commented, "I have a great deal of respect for Naples Informed Parents. I think the movement has been a positive step for the community. We're in much better shape at this point than we were a few years ago." Against all the odds, the majority of Naples teenagers have left drugs behind them, even while their county reached number one ranking in the Nation in seizures of illegal Quaaludes.

As the national media picked up more and more stories on parent groups, letters from parents all over the country poured into Naples. The Bartons' living room became a disaster area, with thousands of letters buried in piles of laundry and hundreds of NIP packets lost among the groceries. Thus, NIP issued a call for help to the community. The organization desperately needed office space if they were to serve not only Naples residents, but the growing number of parent groups in Florida and around the country. By asking businesses and civic clubs to donate one month's rent of $130 each, NIP was soon able to open an office staffed by volunteers. Many businesses donated furniture, office supplies, and services to keep the organization moving. The most appreciated gift came from the children at East Naples Middle School, who donated $200. They had earned the money at a talent show that they organized to help NIP and the Prevent-A-Care project.

Increasingly, drug professionals recognized the effectiveness of the parent movement. Frank Nelson, director of the Florida drug abuse agency, awarded a contract to Pat Barton to develop a parent group network in the State. Working on a part-time basis, Pat became president of Florida Informed Parents. State Prevention Coordinator Jerol Phillips worked with Pat to spread

many of the innovative strategies of NIP to other Florida towns. In the new statewide newsletter to parents Pat explained the plan:

> Under the provisions of the contract, Florida Informed Parents is to provide technical assistance to emerging parent groups and to share information and resources with all parent groups throughout the State of Florida. One of the goals is to provide a network of communications between the Florida parent groups, which now number 80, and a list of which is enclosed with this newsletter.
>
> You are encouraged to share your group's newsletters, flyers, and program information with other Florida parent groups. Some groups are actually sharing programs and educational efforts, and others are coordinating speakers so that expenses can be cut. Perhaps best of all, though, is the exchange of ideas and the knowledge that there are others in the state who are working for the same goals.

In November 1981 Sarasota Informed Parents hosted the first annual statewide parent group conference. The State-sponsored networking plan has been picked up by several other States.

As parent groups mushroomed all over the country, it became evident that a national umbrella organization was needed that could handle the growing volume of mail and refer new parents to regional groups. More important, a federation of parent groups could present a stronger national voice in Washington to legislators, policymakers, and the media. Thus, as part of the official launching of the new organization, at the April 1980 parent conference in Atlanta, Bill Barton was chosen president of the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth, and board members from many States were also chosen.[6]

In a mailing to national Kiwanis Clubs the National Federation of Parents stated:

> Adolescent drug and alcohol use is one of the most serious problems facing our country today. For years government has waged a courageous battle against this insidious problem with only moderate success. There is now a realization that no amount of dollars spent on treatment and law enforcement, however important they are, will solve our drug abuse problem. We need a basic change in attitude which

must emanate not from government but from parents and community leaders....

Over the past three years there has been a very significant response to this problem--a response by parents working within their own communities with no government funding--just the love and concern they have for their own children.

In November 1980 parents and teenagers from Colorado, Florida, Georgia, and Nebraska appeared for 5 days on the "Good Morning, America" show to talk about the parent movement. The mail generated by the show was astounding. By 1981 there were over 1,000 known parent groups working in every State. When First Lady Nancy Reagan invited the Bartons and 40 board members of the National Federation of Parents for a day at the White House, parents around the country knew their message had gotten through to Washington.

Most heartening to parents in many homes, though, was the TV appearance of Bret Barton with his father, both speaking out with their family's special courage and frankness.[7] Bret noted that when he left home for art school in Chicago, he finally realized why his parents had fought so hard to help him and Tracy get free of drugs: "It's a cold, tough world out there, and you need all your wits and strength to make something of your life." He and Tracy, now an enthusiastic college student, appreciate the struggle their parents put up for them--for their chance to become mature, independent, and truly free. What is Bret's advice to younger kids about drugs? "Don't ever start. That's the most important step."

NOTES

1. For copies of the high school behavior code, write Naples Informed Parents, 852 First Ave. S., #110, Naples, FL 33940.

2. Naples Daily News. Parents...full steam ahead in drug war. Nov. 19, 1978.

3. Kaplan, M. Students like tough rules. Miami Herald. Sept. 9, 1979.

4. For information on purchasing or borrowing the film For Parents Only, contact:

   Modern Talking Picture Service, Inc.
   5000 Park St. North
   St. Petersburg, FL 33709
   (813) 541-7571

   National Audiovisual Center
   Information Services/PC
   General Services Administration
   Washington, D.C. 20409
   (301) 763-1896

5. Klein, M. M. A parent's guide to drugs. Tropic (Miami Herald magazine), Dec. 9, 1979.

6. For publications of the National Federation of Parents (including a Parent Group Starter Kit) write Joyce Nalepka, 1820 Framwell Ave., Suite 16, Silver Spring, MD 20902.

7. "Teenage Drug Abuse: What Can Parents Do?" Cable TV program sponsored by Drug Fair and the Appalachian Community Service Network, April 26, 1981.

CHAPTER THREE
SMALL TOWNS IN INDIANA: TIPTON, PENDLETON, AND ZIONSVILLE FIGHT BACK

To drive into any of the small Indiana towns of Tipton, Pendleton, or Zionsville is to drive into a Norman Rockwell painting. To all appearances, these clean and pretty communities offer a wholesome haven from the dirt and distress of America's large urban areas. Yet, as families in rural communities all over America have learned, the Nation's drug epidemic respects no boundaries. In these small, cohesive communities, however, the values and institutions of family and civic life are still strong enough to respond quickly and effectively to this new and alien plague upon their children.

Tipton County Citizens for Youth

Although Susan Warren had given up her job teaching French at the high school, she was still overwhelmed at times by the demands of her three children, aged 6 months to 4 years. She was deeply grateful for the help and loyalty of Holly, her 15-year-old babysitter.* Holly's own family was undergoing much difficulty and stress. Susan and her husband provided some mature and stable companionship at a troubled period in the girl's life. Most important, Holly was crazy about the Warrens' children. Susan thought that with Holly's help she just might survive the colic, teething, and earaches that had worn her out at times. Thus, in May 1978 Susan was stunned when a good friend informed her that Holly had been caught smoking marijuana on the front steps of a church.

Feeling confused and worried, Susan called Holly and asked her to come over. She confronted her with what she had heard and asked Holly what they should do about it. Thus began a long afternoon of talk, tears, anger, and hugs--an afternoon that scared and disturbed Susan. As Holly cried and mumbled, opened

*Not her real name.

up and withdrew, Susan began to realize that the lovely young girl was in deep trouble with drugs and was enmeshed in a tightly woven drug subculture. (Later Holly confessed that she had defiantly smoked a joint before coming over and was high throughout the painful 3-hour conversation.)

That night Susan and her husband debated whether to fire Holly or try to help her. Despite their sense of betrayal and their worry about their own small children, they recognized that Holly loved and needed them and that somebody had to help her. Because of her own family's problems, they were incapable of it. When Holly begged to keep her job and promised to quit using drugs, the Warrens agreed to give her another chance--and crossed their fingers. As Susan observed later, "We were so naive about drugs that we had no idea what we were getting into."

Holly's struggle to stay straight was a lonely and dangerous one. To give up drugs was to give up the only friends she had in high school. The Warrens shuddered as they listened to her tearful tales of the ceaseless pressure that her "druggie" friends put on her--including threatening phone calls from dealers and pills dropped in her soft drinks at school. Eventually she ended up with no friends. The straight kids shunned her because of her previous reputation as a "stoner," and the "stoners" rebuffed and vilified her.

At times the pressure and loneliness were almost too much for Holly, and she became severely depressed and confused. But the Warrens, seeing a decent, loving girl struggling free of drugs and a drug-dominated lifestyle, stuck by her. They took Holly on family vacations and included her in family festivities and gatherings. They tried to learn more about marijuana, pills, and alcohol so they could talk to her and help her understand both the euphoric allure and the hazardous consequences. After much arguing, Holly agreed to go with Susan to a mental health expert. The counselor told them there was nothing wrong with marijuana and that Susan should get off the teenager's back. Feeling more confused, neither she nor the Warrens knew what to do next. In her misery, Holly had a serious relapse, and the Warrens told her she had to go. But the young girl pleaded with them not to withdraw their family from her, for she loved them better than drugs or friends.

By September 1978 the Warrens realized they couldn't help Holly by themselves--not when there was no support for her in the world outside their home. Thus, they sought out other parents, especially older ones with teenage children who were aware of the problem.

Their efforts coincided with those of Dick Michel, a farmer and county councilman, and his wife Beverly. They had tried desperately to get help for their son, but the results of inept counseling which seemed to support their son's drug use were disastrous. Then the Michels tried to contact parents of the boy's friends, only to be rebuffed with denial and hostility. But they were determined never to give up. At least one other couple, Nancy and Meredith Poer, also parents of teenagers, agreed with them that something had to be done about the drug problem. Together the Michels and the Poers decided to spearhead a community awareness effort. They personally called 75 people, among them Ron and Susan Warren, to a private meeting, where they frankly and painfully revealed their families' stories and described, in specific detail, the teenage drug scene in Tipton. Disturbed by what they were learning, the group began to meet informally and then formed a steering committee, of which Susan Warren became a member. By November Tipton County Citizens for Youth was officially on its way.

The fact that many other teenagers besides Holly were troubled by pressures to drink and use drugs was soon made clear by a newspaper article written by a Tipton student about Thanksgiving partying:

> Students chose a number of ways to celebrate their two-day leave of absence and some learned the true meaning of thankfulness....
>
> However, this Monday I was particularly upset while listening to conversations of students' vacations. It seems to me that getting "double vision," like the song says, is becoming an essential part of a number of students' lives. Where does it stop?
>
> Corny, but true, we are soon going to be the taxpayers and the people making decisions. The world isn't always going to cater to our requests and needs like our school system and our parents do. How will it be possible for us to make these decisions when our heads are bent over toilets and a haze covers our brains?...
>
> Isn't it time we took a realistic look around? Try stepping outside the fairy tale and count how many conversations you hear centered around drugs in one week.

> How about it? Is anyone else tired of seeing friends self-destruct? (1)

The newly formed parent group responded with a letter to the editor, praising the teenager's courage. Because of requests the article was reprinted, and people all over town began talking about the teenager's challenge--"How about it?"

When the citizen committee met again, some angry parents wanted to "lynch the schools." They knew kids were using and dealing drugs there, and the schools seemed passive in the face of it all. But after talking to school officials, the parents realized that the schools needed help from the community, not attacks. When the group tried to plan a countermovement to the drug culture, they were stymied by their lack of information on marijuana, which was the touchstone of the whole "get high" mentality. Then, in December, the Warrens saw NBC's "Reading, Writing, and Reefer" on television, and Susan telephoned former NIDA director Robert DuPont, who appeared on the show. DuPont put her in touch with the Atlanta parent groups. After an exchange of information and organizational strategies, Tipton launched its community education project in January 1979.

Using all the publicity mechanisms of a small town--signboards outside the Polar Bear Drive-In, notices on the marquees of the Citizens Bank and the 4-H Club, and exhortations from the pulpit--the Tipton parent group beat the band for a big turnout. When a big blizzard hit, Dick Michel was so determined that the meeting take place that he contributed $225 for snowplows. But even the sponsors were amazed when more than 600 people in a community of 5,000 packed into the 4-H Club building for the first drug awareness forum. As one reporter wrote:

> They came from all walks of life. There were housewives, factory workers, farmers, merchants, business executives, attorneys, policemen, teachers, ministers. . . Their children came too. Several dozen teenagers, most of whom have likely been exposed to drugs at school, sat as attentively as their parents at what was an excellent drug education program. (2)

For the Michels, the Poers, and other committee members, the turnout was the beginning of a turnaround, for they knew they would never be alone again in their battle against drugs.

At the drug forum the speakers painted Tipton's problems in dramatic colors. The attentive audience was shocked to hear county prosecutor Ronald Byal and probation officer Pat Nash

assert that in Tipton 100 percent of the adjudicated juvenile cases and 100 percent of the burglaries and thefts involved people caught up in alcohol and drug abuse. They detailed specific cases of overdoses at school and during Thanksgiving parties.

The estimations by law enforcement officers that 95 percent of the high school students had tried some kind of drug and that 50 percent were regular users stunned school superintendent Clyde Zeek. Although he thought the figures must be too high, he acknowledged that he was probably "naive and fearful when it comes to coping with the growing use of drugs and alcohol by...students." But, mainly, it was almost impossible for a school administrator to get any definite information on the extent and pattern of drug use. "It's amazing to me how effective the blanket of silence is when it comes to finding from some of our known users who else is using drugs or trafficking in them," Zeek said. "This code of silence is supported by an overwhelming peer pressure. If you inform on your fellow student, you will be ostracized and become a social outcast."[3] Zeek was hopeful that school people as well as parents could learn enough about the problem to get on top of it eventually, and he pledged his full cooperation with the citizen committee.

John Stowell, a reporter from the Kokomo Tribune, was so impressed by the concern in Tipton that he wrote a 6-part series on the drug epidemic. In the first article he interviewed a Tipton High School student about the local drug scene. According to the report:

> Drugs such as PCP and, on rarer occasions, LSD often enter the Tipton scene via factories in Kokomo. Some of the biggest suppliers to Tipton teenagers work in area factories, obtain their drugs there, and sell them retail in smaller towns. The factory workers who come home with the drugs are not ...hard-core... users, and they aren't necessarily young either. They are the type who comes home from work, opens a six-pack, sits down in front of the TV all night, and smokes a bowl. (4)

The reporter concluded that the boy's description was "...just another indication that drug use, which in the 1960's was considered a part of the anti-establishment, has in the 1970's become a norm even in traditionally conservative areas such as factories and rural Tipton County."

With the Tipton and Kokomo newspapers carrying articles and letters about drug use, interest was maintained and word spread to other communities about the parent group's efforts. In March another huge audience turned out to view the film "Reading, Writing, and Reefer," which was purchased by the Farm Bureau Agency. Judge Richard Pearce, Ronald Byal, and Pat Nash gave more detailed presentations on the local situation. Nash concluded with a plea to the audience that they look not only to each other for support but also to organized religion. The church "... may be dismissed as a simplistic approach, but I assure you it can provide a foundation for solving the problem," Nash said. "Too many times drug counselors leave parents out of the drug education process, a fact which leaves parents less sophisticated than their children in understanding drugs, which also provides another wedge in the generation gap." 5

By April the tremendous community response to the drug seminars led the county government to send Pat Nash to the PRIDE conference in Atlanta. Susan Warren also attended, and the two talked with Atlanta and Naples parent leaders. On their return they helped the citizen committee plan an all-out effort with parents and kids. They invited a Georgia parent leader to come speak to many community groups and to all students in grades 6-12.

When the visiting speaker watched hundreds of fresh-faced, neatly dressed, and courteous teenagers file into the high school gymnasium, she had a sudden sensation that she had no business being there. Surely these wholesome, well behaved youngsters were not involved in drugs! To pull out the marijuana bongs and cocaine kits that she had just bought in a local record store seemed incongruous, even bizarre, in front of the farm kids of the American heartland. But the students' knowing guffaws and sophisticated questions about a virtual alphabet soup of MDA, THC, and PCP reemphasized the point that drug use had indeed become an all-American phenomenon. The teenagers of Tipton, Indiana listened to the same acid-rock music, watched the same drug-glamorizing movies, and bought the same double-wide rolling papers as teenagers in New York and Los Angeles.

However, Tipton is not a community of anonymity. When Susan Warren introduced herself, she spoke straight into the faces of youngsters who mattered personally to her and to each other.

> Hi, I'm Susan Warren and I graduated from this school in 1964. Everything wasn't rosy then and we were not pure and holy then. But in Tipton when I grew up, there were not any drugs around. Now that we--your

> parents, teachers, and neighbors--are learning about the reality of the drug scene today, we want to help you change this sad situation. It hurts us too much to see so many fine young people being hurt by drugs.

At the back of the gym sat a lonely, scared young girl--Holly--who desperately hoped that enough kids were listening to the only real friend she had left.

The students' encouraging response to the parents' efforts and the community's growing support for the schools delighted Superintendent Zeek. He worked with the citizen group to develop a drug abuse prevention curriculum in grades 1-8, and he shared expenses and schedules for various speakers and projects. With funding from the Pioneer Hi-Bred International Company, the committee and schools worked together to pilot two programs in the schools--"I CAN" and "Quest."[6] Both aimed to build self-esteem and to strengthen students' decision-making skills.

In the meantime committee member Ed Ransopher developed and led a parenting program, and similar programs were launched in community churches. Groups studied Reverend James Dobson's books Dare to Discipline and The Strong-Willed Child and viewed his film series "Focus on the Family."(7) A special section of books and articles on drugs, alcohol, and family development was established at the public library. Later Dr. Stephen Glenn, of the Family Development Institute, visited and conducted 3 days of workshops for parents and teachers with the theme "Developing Capable Children: The Challenge of the '80's." Glenn's message hit home in Tipton, where citizens were making a major commitment to re-educating themselves. "In times of change," Glenn told his audience, "learners shall inherit the earth while the learned find themselves beautifully equipped to handle a world that no longer exists."[8]

Tipton's antidrug activists--amateurs all--soon found themselves in the ironic position of being considered experts. As the word spread to other towns, Tipton parents went on the "rubber chicken" circuit to speak to business groups, clubs, PTAs, and anybody else who wanted help in getting organized. Bill Wehman, a committee founder, played the major role in getting a statewide ban on paraphernalia passed in the legislature. The Tipton Tribune asked the group to write a regular column on their concerns, and the stories were picked up around the State. Susan Warren was invited to tell Tipton's story at several national conferences sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

Meanwhile back at the Warrens' house, Susan and Ron watched Holly strive to stay straight and to develop the maturity and independence to make her own life. When she turned 17, a new girl moved into town who did not judge Holly on her past reputation. Instead she admired the "new" Holly and became a close friend. The new friendship, as well as the new lifestyle, gave Holly a great boost in self-respect and confidence. She learned to love school, began making good grades, and was one of Tipton's proudest graduates in 1980.

Although Holly had a good full-time job in the summer of 1981, she heard that Susan Warren was working hard to finish her master's degree. Deeply grateful for everything the Warrens had done for her, Holly volunteered to come back and help with the kids--as a small repayment for the investment the family had made in her.

The drug scene was far behind her now. But the reality of it had been brought back to her in a frightening experience. At a dentist's office Holly was given some nitrous oxide, and the anesthetic triggered a nightmarish flashback of all her drug experiences. Then in June 1981 a drug bust in Tipton pulled in a host of 19- to 48-year-old dealers--some of them Holly's old friends. The flashback and the bust made clear to Holly and the citizen group that in their battle against drugs they could never let down their guard.

Recognizing that she could easily have ended up as an addict or inmate if someone had not strongly intervened in her life, Holly now advises other adults who learn of a teenager's drug problem to act just as the Warrens did. "Deal with it head on--don't dillydally around," she urges concerned adults. "Be ready for the anger and lying, but don't believe they're permanent. I was furious and scared when Susan and Ron first intruded on my 'private behavior.' I thought they had no right to change me. But they laid out real conditions and consequences for me and then had the endurance to stick with me as I faced up to the possibility of losing their companionship. It was rough on them and rough on me. And it finally brought me more happiness and self-respect than I ever thought I was capable of. I'll always love them for what they did."

South Madison Anti-Drug Organization (SMADO)

Pendleton, Indiana (population 2,300) has long been known as a town where the streets are safe and residents enjoy late night strolls. Surrounded by prosperous farms, the community is proud

of its symphony orchestra and excellent school system. In the fall of 1978, when TV screens began to flash pictures of police dogs and undercover agents making a drug bust at the local high school, many viewers couldn't believe it. Was it an overreaction or did quiet little Pendleton really have a drug problem?

One mother was shocked by the news story, but she also felt immune to the problem. Her son wasn't arrested and obviously wasn't involved. Although she was vaguely worried about puzzling personality changes in her teenager, she glossed them over as "just a phase." Within 3 months, however, she wished her son had been arrested, for she learned the hard way that he had been getting high every day after athletic practice. "I had seen the 30-year-old burnouts who drifted in and out of town, and I knew they had gone to school here, but they never seemed relevant to my family," she recounts ruefully. "Fortunately, when I learned that even a 'good kid' like my son may routinely smoke dope, there was a small group of parents to turn to." It was a group that had started meeting quietly in each others' kitchens after the drug bust, trying to understand what was happening to many Pendleton teenagers.

The group was amazed to learn that despite Pendleton's 800-mile distance from the coastal smuggling points, drugs of every variety were easily available in Indiana. Some law officers called Interstate 75 from Florida through the Midwest the "Dealers' Driveway." Increasingly marijuana was being grown on local farmland. Worse, because of the availability of isolated barns as drug factories, the area was plagued with locally produced "garbage drugs"--counterfeit, adulterated, and chemically faulty pills. Realizing that Pendleton's problem would only get worse if they kept quiet about what they were learning, the small group of parents decided to go public. In October 1979 they organized a town meeting. Although only 33 people showed up, an informal survey of the audience showed that those who came were determined to do something. The South Madison Anti-Drug Organization--or SMADO--was formally launched.

After seeking information and advice from State agencies and other community groups, the parents decided they were getting enough materials and support to plan a major community effort. They invited a PRIDE speaker to visit and design a pyramiding parent education project. In addition to large town meetings, SMADO wanted to focus on prevention at the elementary and middle school levels. At their first workshop, they trained teams of four to five parents from each sixth- through eighth-grade class. These team members then trained two parent leaders in

each homeroom. Ultimately, SMADO-trained parents contacted every parent of children in the three grades.[9] Their goal was for each parent to link up with other parents in small parent peer groups based on their child's circle of friends. The SMADO parents pointed out that it was easier to start parent peer groups before kids get to the age when they act "as if Mom and Dad just came out of the deep-freeze from the last Ice Age." But they also urged parents never to assume that it was too late to begin communicating with other parents. "If you keep in touch with other parents about your common rules, it is much easier to open up to each other about big problems," notes one parent of older teens. "As you work with each other and with your children, you will know what rules need to be changed, loosened, or tightened as the children grow and mature."

At the workshops when parents learned about the "do drugs" messages that manipulate peer pressure, several asked for some kind of program that would help their children resist negative peer pressure. Dr. Mike Cohn, of the State Department of Public Instruction, offered to instruct the mothers in techniques of "Assertiveness Training" that they could introduce in the children's classrooms.[10] The women learned how to act out skits-and to involve the kids--in ways of handling peer pressure. One parent team worked with children in kindergarten through third grade and another with children in grades 4-6. The mothers' skits were dramatic, funny, and thought-provoking. The kids loved them and begged for more. SMADO parent Helen Reske notes that this project was especially effective in getting younger parents involved early in prevention, since parents of very young children are often hard to mobilize. SMADO member Beverly Burns volunteered to write up a continuing program that she and Becky Arthur, another parent, would teach annually to fifth- and sixth-graders.

To reach the high school students SMADO drew upon the medical expertise and clinical experience of a dynamic young nurse, Judy Martin, whose husband was a community physician. After attending the workshop, Judy became determined to research and present a strong prohealth biological message to young people. She talked to the older teenagers about the effects of drugs and alcohol on human physiology, focusing particularly on sexual development, sexual relationships, reproduction, infant health, and future health. The high schoolers appreciated the frank talk and sound information of the classroom discussions. As one student observed, "To understand how complex and fragile the human reproductive system is makes you gain a whole new perspective on the stupidity of maybe messing it up with chemicals." Judy also devised colorful and imaginative presentations for younger children.

Despite limited funds, SMADO members were determined to get their message out to other communities and to legislators. They asked the two local newspapers to let them write a monthly column, to help print their newsletter, and to distribute it inside the newspapers. Thus, the group was able to reach more than 2,000 readers at a very low cost. When they heard Georgia Congressman Billy Lee Evans, of the U.S. House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse, call for public support of antismuggling bills then tied up in committee, Pendleton parents launched the "WEB" letter-writing campaign. First a parent went to the public library and got the names and addresses of every newspaper in Indiana. Then a chain letter was sent to all of them and to all the fledgling parent groups in the State. The letter asked concerned citizens to write to their Congressional representatives in support of the antidrug legislation, to send a copy of their letters to their local newspapers, and then to recruit at least four other people to write similar letters. The letter exhorted parents with "Let's form a letter-writing WEB OF COMMUNICATION to let CONGRESS know we are truly concerned about the DRUG EPIDEMIC that has afflicted our YOUTH!"*

The hundreds of Indiana letters that reached Washington made a big impact on legislators. As Congressman Evans noted, "We legislators estimate that ten letters from constituents represent the concerns of ten thousand citizens. Anybody who will take the time to write is voicing the fears and desires of thousands more." He reminds citizens concerned about drug abuse that the prodrug lobbyists not only write letters but also personally contact Congressional staff and representatives, for they have billions of dollars at stake in their effort to unravel the drug laws. "You parents have your children at stake--that's certainly worth taking 10 minutes to write a letter to <u>your</u> elected Representative."

In Pendleton concerned parents are showing that they will reclaim their pleasant town from the drug culture. They will continue to take their evening strolls, and they will once again have teenagers who "get high" on sports, not on drugs. By reweaving the WEB of communication and commitment in their own neighborhoods, they hope to show more communities and

*This is very similar to the strategy developed by the Committees of Correspondence, an organization that is also concerned with preventing drug abuse throughout the country and has had great success. For information about this organization contact: Otto and Connie Moulton, Committees of Correspondence, Box 238, Topfield, MA 01983, 617/774-5626.

more elected officials that concerned American parents are a force to be reckoned with.

Zionsville Awareness: Alcohol and Drug Abuse

When visitors come to Zionsville, a pastoral community of 4,000 just outside suburban Indianapolis, they are delighted with the early American homes and shops in the impeccably restored colonial village. The beautiful homes and gardens suggest that the good life of the "good old days" is still to be found in such a tasteful, affluent community. In March 1980 Donna Monday, editor of the Zionsville Sentinel Dispatch, hesitated before deciding to publish a long article written by Lori Hardin, editor of the Zionsville high school newspaper, The Harbinger. The article made some sweeping charges about drug and alcohol use among local teenagers. Would it be irresponsible to publish it? Or would it be worse to ignore what the editor believed to be a collective cry for help? Taking a chance, Monday published the article under the headline "A Teenager Addresses Parents."

> Parties. There is the Republican party and there is the Democratic party. There are birthday parties for children and there are Tupperware parties for ladies. There is also another type of party which is more common to the average teenager in Zionsville.
>
> It is the "get drunk" or "get high" party. It usually takes place in a car filled with other teenagers. They "party" while they "cruise" around town...or it can take place at someone's house when Mom and Dad aren't home. Partying is a pastime for a majority of Zionsville's teenagers. The Harbinger recently surveyed approximately 150 students about "partying" and its effect on peer pressure and moral and religious beliefs. Here are the results:
>
> 1. 71% of the students stated that they "party."
> 2. The majority of students that "party" do so once or more a week.
> 3. Of the students who "party," 84% drink beer; 81% drink alcoholic beverages stronger than beer; 59% smoke pot; and 16% take drugs.
> 4. 62% of the students think partying is a problem among teens.
> 5. 69% of the students feel that youth are losing their morals or becoming apathetic. 80% of these students would like to see this change.... (11)

After listing suggestions from students on what parents and the community could do to help change the drug and drinking scene, the student editor asked, "Parents, now that you've heard the statistics, are you concerned?. . . Teenagers want to do other things. They want the partying scene to change. But they can't do it by themselves. They need help--help from adults, encouragement from their parents to do what is right."

Within a week the Sentinel Dispatch had to run another editorial headlined "Teen's Message Strikes a Nerve." As the editor wrote, "We knew when we printed the message from a teenager in last week's paper we would hit a nerve. Still, we were totally unprepared for the response we received. The phone has been ringing off the hook. Parents have been calling all week to ask, 'What can we do to help?' Others have called simply to bare their souls and to tell us that we have scratched the tip of an iceberg. . . A letter to the editor carries a plea for Concerned Citizens to write in care of this paper, Box 96...."

The editor knew that whoever wrote to Box 96 would receive a caring and sincere response. This was the box holder's own reply to the teenager's cry for help:

> This morning I read your letter and found it impossible not to respond. My mind, my heart and my very soul cried out, "Yes, I do know what you're saying... I'm living it!"
>
> Last night I picked up an album of family snapshots. Such joy expressed on the face of our child with that first trike! ...a furry new puppy... the first day of school with a brand new notebook...balloons and streamers at a birthday party...nose to nose with a colt on a farm...racing along the beach to beat the waves...
>
> I turned to look at our child now...slumped in a chair, watching TV as usual, a blank, empty expression interrupted only by a sarcastic grin and comment about the "pig" on the video show.
>
> Almost overcome by a mixture of hurt, guilt, fear, sadness, and most of all, FRUSTRATION, I allowed myself at that moment the reprieve of believing that this young person could be helped. There is enough basic wholeness upon which to build and grow if only we could find the key to unlock what has literally become a prison. (12)

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By March 31 the response to the news article had grown to the point that a notice was published with an open invitation to a meeting at a local cafeteria to discuss the topic "Concern About Teen Partying in This Area." When 30 parents showed up, they looked around with amazement. "It was like coming out of the closet and finding that other people were struggling with our private nightmare too," remembers one parent. Although most of the parents were hesitant about going public with their concerns ("We were still in the anonymous 'parent wrapped in plain brown paper' stage," laughs one mother), four people published their phone numbers in the paper and offered to help anyone who called. One couple had lost their son in a drug-related accident, and they were determined to reach out to help others. The group formed a committee called "Concerned Parents," and began to plan other meetings.

At a subsequent meeting charges and countercharges were hurled about keg parties, parents who did or did not chaperone, and drug use at the schools. One angry father drew up a petition that called upon the schools to get busy solving the drug and alcohol problem. Although some parents refused to sign because the petition seemed unfair to the schools, enough did sign to make an impression on the school board.

Rather than deny the problem or throw it back in the face of the parents, school board members were glad that citizens were getting fed up with the situation. Because the drug and alcohol problem was really a matter of communitywide responsibility, the town board and the school board joined together in a task force to investigate the problem in Zionsville thoroughly and to research possible solutions.

Concerned Parents organizer Sandy Lenthall notes that the task force was important in overcoming the sense of timidity and helplessness of the original parent group. The whole subject of drugs was extremely touchy, and the community had swept it under the rug for years. Because the task force included many prominent and talented citizens, it made tackling the drug issue head-on a respectable activity. Chaired by Dr. Robert Williams, research director of Eli Lilly Co., the group issued questionnaires and surveys to teachers and students that elicited valuable information on the extent and patterns of usage and many suggestions for specific courses of action.[13]

As in other communities, investigators learned that the age of initial drug experimentation had dropped over the past 4 years (from an average age of 14 to 12) and that eighth grade was a critical point of decision making (7 percent of seventh-graders

had tried marijuana, 34 percent of ninth-graders, and 63 percent of eleventh-graders). By eleventh grade, the investigators were shocked to learn, 21 percent had used cocaine and 12 percent had used LSD. Alcohol use accompanied all the illegal drug use. Interestingly, in response to a question about whether parents or sitters were home when the children returned from school or parties, the percentage of "yes" answers declined steadily with grade level--from 98 percent in seventh grade to 58 percent in eleventh grade. Most drug and alcohol use took place at parties and at friends' homes when parents were away, and about 20 percent took place at school and school-sponsored events.

While the task force continued to compile its information, members joined forces with Concerned Parents to sponsor a drug awareness booth at the annual fall festival. Amid the carnival atmosphere of dunking seats and balloon busts, Zionsville parents handed out brochures, signed up members, and talked for hours to sightseeing visitors. Many young people stopped at the booth, often confiding that "I have a friend who. . . ."

The parent group continued to hold regular meetings and worked on a full-day educational project. Then they joined forces with parent groups in neighboring Noblesville and Washington Township to invite a PRIDE speaker from Georgia to work with students, teachers, law enforcement personnel, and religious leaders.

Like other visitors to Zionsville, the Georgian was charmed by the attractive architecture and meticulous landscaping of the little town. It seemed impossible that the drug culture could find a place among the picturebook boutiques and shops.

While meeting with police chief Phil Parmelee she asked if the local kids could go off to Indianapolis to get drug paraphernalia. He laughed and said, "Sure, but they don't need to drive to the big bad city. They can get all they want right here in Zionsville." Then he opened a large display case with an astounding variety of drug paraphernalia. "That is the all-time Academy Award winning bong show!" gasped the Georgian. She then asked Chief Parmelee to bring the display to a national parent group conference.

Parmelee was amused but also disturbed. "It's kind of sickening," he said, "to think of standing before hundreds of parent leaders from around the country and know that 90 percent of what they'll see on the display board I had personally collected in our little town of 4,000 people." With the help of the American Legion, Parmelee subsequently made up smaller portable bong

shows for parents to take along on their growing numbers of speaking engagements.

Chief Parmelee's enthusiastic and tireless work with the community awareness project generated happy endings to previously miserable stories. While toughening up law enforcement, the chief also worked to persuade teenagers to choose to go straight. Several young people donated their bongs and power-hitters to the chief. "Parmelee busted us, but he treated us fairly," explained one 19-year-old who brought in a potted marijuana plant.

Another leading citizen who contributed significantly to the community group's effort was Father Tom Ehrich, pastor of Saint Francis-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church. As he began to work with the parents, he realized that churches could and should be playing a much stronger role in the fight against drugs. He had learned much about the spiritual emptiness and degraded values of the popular culture in which so many youngsters were becoming lost. As the father of a new baby, he recognized that the struggle for higher ethical and spiritual values for the national culture must be won if there was to be a decent environment for his own child in the future. Thus, Father Ehrich wrote a remarkable pastoral letter to all his parishioners, explaining in detail the historical background and frightening effects of the drug epidemic, which was tearing families apart. "The child's dependency problem usually hits the home at the point of greatest weakness in the marriage," wrote Father Ehrich, "when the parents are going through middle-age trauma, job pressures, plus the problems associated with corporate transiency." Father Ehrich urged his parishioners to join the antidrug effort. "Not only is our culture at a crossroads," he wrote. "Your family is at a crossroads too. This is <u>your</u> problem, as it is mine. As your priest, as a fellow parent, as a citizen who wants a workable society tomorrow, as a Christian who believes in God's power to heal and God's eagerness to work with his people in rescuing the lost sheep--I beg you to act."

By early 1981 the Zionsville parents had determined to focus their efforts on educational programs for families as part of a long-term effort to strengthen families and counteract the power of the drug culture. They had also incorporated as an independent, nonprofit corporation called Zionsville Awareness: Alcohol and Drug Abuse, or ZAADA.

In order to reach the maximum number of parents with good information and parent peer group strategies, ZAADA sponsored workshops for parents of sixth- through eighth-graders. Drawing

on the experience of Helen Reske and the Pendleton parent group, ZAADA first trained 29 parent leaders (including many husband-wife teams), who then conducted followup workshops for homeroom parents. More than 60 percent of the middle school parents participated, and the response was so positive that ZAADA had to give makeup workshops for the parents who missed. At the request of elementary and high school parents, special workshops for these age-groups were also held. With parents of older teenagers, ZAADA focused on the problems of driving, drugs, and alcohol. Parent team leaders also made house calls, which became important in reaching families who didn't usually participate in school functions.

Once the Zionsville parents felt they were getting well enough educated and had a clear game plan, they began to develop projects that would more directly involve teenagers. ZAADA obtained a grant from a local foundation to train high school peer counselors and pay them $3 an hour to work with younger students. The major focus was on academic tutoring, but the students were trained to spot drug and alcohol problems and to get adult help for the children. Another innovative program that ZAADA hoped to implement was a volunteer-run judicial diversion program designed as an alternative or supplement to school suspension procedures. Also, with the help of a local bank, ZAADA purchased a film on genetics and human development entitled "The Most Important Nine Months of Your Life," which became popular in health and substance abuse classes.

In December 1981 Zionsville parents were thrilled when the Indianapolis Star spotlighted "The Town That Listened to a Teen-Age Girl":

> This is a story of power. But not power on a grand scale. It is the story of the power of one teen-age girl, who had the courage to define a community drug and alcohol problem and appeal for help; the power of a woman editor of a small newspaper, concerned enough to print the appeal; the power of a mother, with problems of her own, who was willing to get involved. It is the story of a town whose leaders had the courage to admit the problem existed and whose citizens volunteered to try to solve it. (14)

* * * * *

In the 4 years since parents in Tipton joined together to mount a countermovement to the drug culture, more than 65 communities in Indiana have joined the battle. Many of the group leaders meet informally to exchange ideas and resources, and they are developing a statewide network of parent groups. Top officials in the State school system and law enforcement agencies are encouraged by the impact of the parent groups, and they are using their offices to assist the parents' campaign against drugs.

Harold Negley, the State Superintendent of Schools, offers strong support for the parent movement in letters and publications from his office. When Negley argues the need for increased funding for stronger antidrug instruction in the public schools, he often quotes Walt Whitman, the poet of the American heartland: "I would rather be taxed for the education of a boy than the ignorance of the man. I will be taxed for one or the other."

For Susan Warren, who initiated the Indiana parent movement because of her concern about a 15-year-old babysitter, the investment her family made has been worth it. "When I see the light in Holly's eyes today," she says, "I know that's what it's all about."

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CHAPTER FOUR
CONNECTICUT: FROM MAGAZINE ARTICLE TO INTER-TOWN ALLIANCE

To Dr. August Fink, publisher of Patient Care magazine and father of four teenage daughters, the difficulty of finding sound medical information on marijuana in the mid-'70s posed increasingly serious problems for physicians and parents. From surveys made by his editorial board, Fink knew that doctors' attitudes about the drug ranged from "reefer madness" to "harmless weed." From his own daughters' experiences, he knew that these contradictory views confused young people and made them vulnerable to peer and cultural pressures to "liberate" themselves from adult hypocrisy through "drug tripping." When he attended a lecture by Dr. Gabriel Nahas, of Columbia University, on the historical problems of hashish use and a research update on the complex, fat-soluble chemicals in the drug, Dr. Fink determined that Patient Care would get the new information out to practicing physicians.

When the article "Time to Change Attitudes on Marijuana?" was distributed to 100,000 primary care physicians in April 1978, Dr. Fink knew he had struck a nerve.[1] In the unprecedented wave of mail that came in, 99 percent of the physicians who responded indicated that they did not previously know any of the biological effects of marijuana and were grateful for the article. One percent of the responses asked Fink how dare he insult the "nectar of the gods." Most moving, though, were the many letters from parents, who had received the article from their doctors, and who asked, "Why weren't we told this before--before we lost our children to this insidious drug?" Fink decided to form an organization, Citizens for Informed Choices on Marijuana (CICOM), which would disseminate updated research to the public.

Impressed by Peggy Mann's ground-breaking article on international marijuana research, which appeared in the Washington Post in July 1978, Fink invited her to come to Stamford, Connecticut, for a major press conference on the

health hazards of marijuana and the need for massive public education.[2] NIDA director Robert DuPont, pharmacology professor James O'Brien, and adolescent medicine specialist Walter Lehmann were all scheduled to speak. Although several major newspapers and national news magazines sent reporters to the press conference, none of them reported the story--in fact, one journalist admitted to being a pot smoker and pooh-poohed the research reports. However, several local papers, including the Greenwich Time, did cover the story, and CICOM began to receive calls from Connecticut parents who were disturbed by the effects of marijuana on their own children.[3] Dr. Fink sensed that the people who most needed the medical information were parents, the ones who were fighting the marijuana battle in their own homes.

One mother who paid attention to the reports of the press conference was Alison McKee, wife of a Greenwich physician. She attended a dinner party for Mann, DuPont, and company, and she was stirred by the concerns of the scientists and the parents about the massive "biological experiment" that so many young "guinea pigs" were thoughtlessly and carelessly involved in. She listened to one writer describe her efforts to deal with her pot-smoking 14-year-old daughter. The girl defiantly argued with her mother, who could get nowhere on the issue, until the mother researched enough medical information to convince the girl that marijuana was more than a "harmless giggle," as the rock stars had claimed.[4]

Alison McKee had already raised one teenager in the '60s, and she remembered how the marijuana issue had divided so many families at the time. Few parents then understood the drug's effects on their children's personalities, and they were baffled and hurt by the irritability and hostility that often flared in family conversations. She remembered how one teenager, a lovely girl, had so taunted her mother over the pot issue that the distraught parent had thrown a whipped-cream-laden pumpkin pie in her daughter's face, much to the astonishment of the assembled Thanksgiving guests. With another young son going into fifth grade, Mrs. McKee was determined that she and other parents would be better prepared "this round" to deal with the drug issue. But, mainly, she was determined that the drug epidemic did not have to be accepted as an inevitable fact. If she could do anything, she would get rid of the drug scene before her fifth-grader had to face teenage peer pressures and party situations.

Thus, Alison McKee volunteered at the dinner party to help CICOM in its efforts to disseminate good information to parents

and physicians. Drawing upon the needs of Connecticut parents and on the strategies of the Georgia parent groups, she worked with the professional writers at Patient Care who were in the process of developing a series of pamphlets called Helping Your Child Resist the Marijuana Culture.[5] The pamphlets soon became a valuable tool in helping parents develop an individual and neighborhood plan for survival in the expanding "chemical culture" of the late '70s.

In April 1979 Alison McKee went on to found an independent group, the Greenwich Advisory Council on Youth and Drugs. Because of the large number of private schools in Greenwich and the overlapping social life of teenagers in private and public schools, Mrs. McKee sought the involvement of every school principal and headmaster in the planning of the communitywide project. In an extremely affluent community with much stress on high educational standards, the school heads had a great deal of influence and credibility. The council put together a brochure on marijuana and distributed it through a series of parent and staff meetings at every school. Mrs. McKee later observed that the inclusion of all the schools right from the start was critical in avoiding finger pointing or a sense that one school had worse problems than another one. The administrators and parent leaders from each school agreed that any drug use by teenagers, whether 20 percent or 80 percent of the student body, was a problem for all Greenwich citizens. They also agreed to pool their resources, rather than waste time on charges and countercharges about who was at fault.

Before launching the 1979 school prevention project, the Council asked the Greenwich Time to prepare a series on alcohol and drug abuse in the community to broaden public awareness of the problem. The first series, entitled "Greenwich--the Capital of Alcohol Abuse?," explained the particular vulnerability of local teenagers to alcohol abuse because of the unusually high usage rates among Greenwich adults. In a commuter community, with many corporate transfers, a highly pressured working life, and an active social life, regular alcohol use was ingrained in the lifestyle.[6]

The high price of alcohol-related problems included an estimated 17 percent alcoholism rate among adult drinkers in Greenwich, in contrast to the national average of 10 percent. The articles pointed out that because of the continuing stigma attached to alcoholism, the large numbers of problem drinkers were part of "a hidden epidemic," virtually concealed from the public and from community leaders who influenced policies. The crisis was further cloaked, the articles noted, "by the alcoholic's own

relentless attempts to hide his condition and by a host of well-meaning but misguided relatives, doctors, and coworkers who aid and abet the coverup."[7]

This excellent series triggered increasing community concern among parents about how the unusually easy access to alcohol might affect their children. Although the great majority of parents did not abuse alcohol, they recognized that their children were exposed to a lifestyle in which drinking was interwoven with nearly all social functions. But the special article on teen usage helped the parents recognize that the "get high and party" mentality of the contemporary youth culture greatly increased the pressures on the community's youngsters to begin drinking at a very early age.[8] Rather than initiating drinking as a rite of passage into young adulthood, local children were beginning to drink as an entry into adolescence.

The local studies showed that most students took their first real drink (as opposed to a sip from a parent's glass) at age 12½ and that 75 percent of them had been drunk by eighth grade. When the Alcoholism Council estimated that 1 of 5 students developed a drinking problem by twelfth grade, many students at private and public schools considered that figure too low. The teenagers' consensus was that "everyone drinks" and the numbers getting drunk regularly on weekends were rapidly increasing.

The problem for young people, which many parents were not aware of, was the emphasis on total intoxication--that is, drinking patterns influenced by the drug culture's emphasis on "getting wasted" or "blown away." One youth advisor noted that she heard stories in classrooms that scared her. "Almost everyone I see can remember the time Joe or Sue or Jane or they themselves passed out from drinking too much," she said. "One incident involved a girl at a junior high who apparently took two Quaaludes and washed them down with vodka." Ironically, because many parents were more afraid of illicit drugs, they rationalized their children's illegal, underage drinking as "the lesser of two evils." The parents were naively relieved that their children were just "on booze" and not on "hard drugs." Most parents and educators still did not recognize that many of the youngsters were using alcohol in combination with other drugs. Thus, the newspaper assigned an investigative reporter to work with school surveyors to develop a clearer picture of the extent of the illicit drug problem.

During the year that this study was under way the Greenwich Advisory Council forged on with its own public education project. Alexander Uhle, the respected headmaster of

Greenwich Academy, issued an invitation to the 25 schools in the area to attend a council-sponsored workshop on youth and drugs in November 1979. Each school was invited to send a team consisting of the principal, teachers, parents, PTA officers, and the school nurse. Members of the clergy, youth workers, and mental health professionals were also invited.

At the workshop Dr. Gabriel Nahas, now president of the International Medical Council on Drug Abuse, presented an update on marijuana research. A panel featuring local police officers, parents, counselors, and students described the specifics of drug use patterns in the community. One participant in the workshop was Elizabeth Coleman, a writer for the New York Times. She was impressed by the research findings and the sincerity of the parents' concerns. But, mainly, she was appalled by the display of drug paraphernalia that had been purchased in local stores.

The Times reporter visited with some children after school, who assured her that drugs and paraphernalia were easy to get and that most kids accepted the casualness of use and availability of supplies as a sign that drugs, especially marijuana, were harmless. In an important article entitled, "New Parental Push Against Marijuana," which later appeared in the New York Times Magazine, Coleman described her visit to a Connecticut "headshop":

> Late one afternoon in the Bedford Record Shop in Stamford, Conn., two boys, 14 years of age, examine the array of glass and plastic water pipes, or "bongs," and then move on to counters covered by garish bowls and roach clips (to permit smoking of the last fragment of a joint) and tubes and other pot paraphernalia. They pause beside the fake Diet Pepsi cans with the glass container for grass inside. One of the two young customers, whose teeth are hidden behind a solid wall of braces, settles on a facsimile of an M-16 shell that is, in fact, a roach clip. "Have fun, guys," says the shopkeeper as he puts the purchase into a brown paper bag. "No one will ever guess." (9)

For Alison McKee and the Greenwich Advisory Council, the publication of this article demonstrated that they had come a long way from the days, just 18 months earlier, when so many reporters ignored or laughed at the press conference about adolescent marijuana problems.

Because of the positive response from parents to the first workshop, the Advisory Council decided to expand its parent education project by joining forces with the PTA Council and the Junior League. Several League chapters in Connecticut had already gotten involved in various drug abuse prevention projects. The chapter in Stamford-Norwalk sponsored a much-admired alcohol education project for children in grades 3-6. The Greater Bridgeport chapter had initiated a task force on drugs in 1978 and developed a slide show and brochure on the theme "Marihuana: More Harmful Than You Think." The Bridgeport group agreed to come to Greenwich in January 1980 for a followup workshop to train more speakers and to implement parent networking. Using a tape on drug pharmacology developed by Dr. James O'Brien, a script on how to motivate and work with a small parent group, and overhead slide projections, the Junior League trained 60 volunteers who would then fan out in the Greenwich area to present drug awareness programs. Within 2 years several thousand parents saw these programs at "Back to School" nights in Greenwich and surrounding communities.

Recognizing that there were still thousands of parents who did not attend the school meetings, the Advisory Council produced another brochure, Marijuana Facts, which was mailed to every parent in the school system.[10] The brochure included the names and phone numbers of parent facilitators at each school who were responsible for drug and alcohol programs and for enlisting participation in parent support groups for the schools. In order to spark discussion at small parent meetings, the council developed a "Parent Quiz" to be an informational tool and to help parents recognize what they did not know about drugs. The group also prepared packets of medical and scientific information that were donated to all school and public libraries.

Despite the gratifying momentum of the community project, Greenwich parents were frustrated by the lack of strong State efforts against the drug culture. After contacting Families in Action groups in Georgia and learning about methods of developing strong paraphernalia legislation, Alison McKee decided to take the parents' case to Connecticut legislators. Thus, in March 1980, when a bill against headshops appeared in committee, she traveled to the capital, toting along a large wicker basket. After describing the makeup and function of the Greenwich Advisory Council, she testified:

> As a group, we are deeply concerned about the epidemic use of marijuana and other drugs by minors, and we believe that cooperation among informed and

> concerned parents, educators, and others who work with and influence children is the best hope for achieving our goal of a drug-free community.... We feel that we have waited in vain for the "experts" and "authorities" to speak up publicly about the health hazards of marijuana. Therefore, we are beginning a do-it-yourself project. (11)

Then this "do-it-yourself" drug fighter, who had never been a public speaker or activist before, overwhelmed the legislators with a powerful and urgent call for strong legislative action against the spreading drug epidemic.

As Mrs. McKee recalls, she was so nervous that her knees were knocking, but the arrogant attempt by headshop owners who were testifying that paraphernalia really consisted only of toilet paper rolls and paper clips made her so angry that she suddenly produced her own "bong show." "Feeling like Little Red Riding Hood in the wolf's den, I pulled out of my wicker basket a glittering assortment of kiddie drug toys and comic books bought in Connecticut stores," she recalls. While the astounded legislators leafed through pornographic drug comic books and glossy "head" magazines, she continued her testimony. In purchasing the drug paraphernalia at a store in Westport, Connecticut, she noted, "As I was walking out the door, in came a gaggle of 10- and 11-year-old girls. There were any number of enticing items for them to browse through." Judy Nessle, representing the Junior League, joined Mrs. McKee in an appeal to the Connecticut lawmakers to pass the Federal model law on drug paraphernalia as a service to the State's parents and children.

With the debate over headshops focusing increasing public attention on the kiddie drug scene, the Greenwich Advisory Council began to get calls from other towns requesting help in organizing. Thus, the council invited Buddy Gleaton, from the PRIDE center in Atlanta, to help develop more school-team workshops and a cooperative game plan between neighboring towns. Parent leaders from Darien, New Canaan, Bridgeport, Fairfield, Norwalk, Ridgefield, and other communities began to meet periodically as the Inter-Town Committee for Prevention of Drug Use. In June 1980 the committee sponsored Lee Dogoloff, the President's drug adviser, who encouraged their efforts as the Nation's best hope in turning the tide of the drug epidemic.[12] Noting that the Federal Government spends nearly $1 billion a year in antidrug efforts, he asserted that the real key is the reduction of consumer demand--and that key is found in "parent power." "Children are influenced by the people closest

to them," observed Dogoloff, "and most children I know don't have a warm personal relationship with the Federal Government. That's why the White House backs the parent movement."

Reinforced in their commitment, the Greenwich Advisory Council decided to enlist more media support for their efforts. In anticipation of the imminent release of the drug use survey data from the public schools, they wanted to educate the media ahead of time about the importance of using that information constructively. What Greenwich did not need, after a year of cooperation between public and private schools, were any implications in the media that the public schools were being singled out as the sole focus of the drug problem. Thus, the Council sponsored a luncheon for media representatives to present their analysis of the national epidemic nature of drug use, of the new research findings, and of the role that local parents could play in helping the schools to prevent drug abuse among their children. The media representatives appreciated the educational forum and promised thorough and objective coverage of the issues.

In July 1980 the high school survey results showed that Greenwich students were near the national norm for marijuana use. However, many educators and parents were surprised by how much use took place during the school week. Of 350 seniors responding to the survey, 46 percent admitted to marijuana use, and more than half this number (25 percent) reported use during the week--the rest confined use to weekends. Twelve percent reported almost daily use. In response to growing community concern about the impact on students' educational achievement, the school board held a public hearing at which many proposals for action and curriculum changes were discussed.

Subsequently, a special Health Education Advisory Committee researched and developed a comprehensive health education curriculum with a particularly strong focus on drugs and alcohol.[13] The innovative course of study also covered nutrition, pollution, medications, behavior, and sexuality, featuring age-appropriate materials. Significantly, the curriculum recognized the many negative pressures on children from the media and popular culture and therefore aimed at developing critical and evaluative skills, beginning in the early grades, to counteract advertising claims, biased information, and conflicting arguments. The Greenwich Advisory Council shared its resources and literature with the school system and made a commitment to help fund the training of teachers to present the new curriculum.

With the implementation of the school program in 1981-82, the concerned parents of Greenwich were pleased that children were receiving more consistent messages from home and school. To ensure that new parents would be updated on basic drug information as well as changing situations, the Greenwich Junior League offered its services to the council to maintain an ongoing "Parents Together" project. Each year this project will organize basic awareness programs for parents of primary-grade students. After an initial emphasis on drugs and alcohol, the programs will expand into broader issues of effective parenting for children of different ages. Meanwhile, to maintain the strong liaison between the parent groups and the schools, the Advisory Council will prepare an annual report on current problem areas and effective efforts for distribution to all school administrators.

Determined to stay on top of the drug use patterns from year to year (especially because of the increased availability of cocaine and a resurgence of LSD use), the council began working with the Youth Services Bureau to implement a communitywide investigation of youth needs and a drug and alcohol use survey of all students in grades 7-12. As one council member observed, "With the head shops closed down and the drug culture taking a lower profile, we don't want to get lulled into a false sense of security. This epidemic didn't develop overnight, and we can afford no illusions that it has disappeared overnight--despite the significant progress made in Greenwich over the past 3 years."

Since 1979 what has distinguished the prevention effort in Greenwich from those in many other communities has been the high level of cooperation between all school administrators. By providing a unified front against adolescent drug and alcohol use--in public, private, and parochial schools--the educators have bolstered the parents' commitment to building their own unified front in order to cope with their children's varied and far-flung social contacts in the three different school systems. A second strong point has been the energetic and generous linking up with parent groups in neighboring communities.

As one mother in New Canaan recalls, "When I telephoned a parent on the Greenwich council, it was like being thrown a lifeline. Before that, many parents in New Canaan were watching helplessly as our children were sinking deeper into the quicksand of the drug culture." With the informational materials and practical suggestions from Greenwich, the New Canaan parents were able to move quickly to implement their own parent awareness and drug intervention effort. Notes one observer, "A series of coffees in private homes for parents of all

sixth-graders did more to start a turnaround in our community than a million-dollar Federal grant could have done." A humorous yet poignant poem, written by a mother who had joined a parent group, demonstrated that in New Canaan--as in the rest of the country--knowledge is the beginning of "parent power":

Life's such a hassle,
Since Mom got wise.
She goes through my pockets,
And looks in my eyes.
My secret places,
Are secret no more,
It's almost too much to bear.
I can't get away with
A thing, these days,
Since Mom became "AWARE."

Don't even enjoy my stereo,
She's learned to decipher the songs.
My "High Times" and posters are gone,
She knows about "pot" and "bongs."
My friends and I can't talk,
It's a bore,
Cause Mom knows the slang,
And a whole lot more.
Getting high's such a drag,
It's really not fair,
All the fun has gone out,
Since Mom got "AWARE."

I can't bake hash brownies,
She's heard of them too,
And she knows that my pipe
Is not a "Kazoo."
The fog is beginning to lift in my head,
I've lost that glassy stare,
All my papers and roaches
Have disappeared,
Since Mom became "AWARE."

Dad's eating his berries
Without the whipped cream,
Since she heard we got high
On the can.
Who asked her to read,
And become informed?
Why can't she knit an afghan?
Oh! What have I done,

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To deserve such a fate?
Parents who really care!
I was quite content,
Slipping down the drain,
Before Mom became "AWARE."

Barbara Pace*

* * * * *

In May 1980, determined to continue spreading knowledge about drugs and their effects on families, Dr. August Fink published another Patient Care update on research entitled, "Answering Questions About Marijuana Use."[14] Because of the critical role that family physicians can play in diagnosis and intervention with young patients, the U.S. House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse reprinted the article as a service to the public. As committee chairman, Lester Wolff observed, "One of the key elements in contributing to the eradication of this public health issue is the family physician and the general practictioner. He or she is very often the first professional to encounter...psycho-social manifestations of marijuana abuse. Physician education and, in turn, parent and community education and counseling are critical issues in our battle with drug abuse."[15]

In Connecticut the growing alliance between practicing physicians, concerned parents, and educators has proved stronger than a commercialized drug culture that assumed, just 4 years ago, that it had already won the war. As one Connecticut parent noted, "When Mom becomes aware, the drug promoters better watch out!"

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CHAPTER FIVE
NEBRASKA: A DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGN THAT GREW

Although TV star Johnny Carson once observed that "you can't go home again," he returned in February 1982 to his old home town of Norfolk, Nebraska. There he filmed a live show filled with affectionate memories of a happy childhood and a simpler era.[1] Walking along a lonely railroad track in the great open spaces, Carson paid tribute to the "Midwest Ethic" of strong family traditions, warm neighborliness, and blunt honesty--qualities of his own parents that had blessed him with a wholesome, fulfilled childhood. Remembering his job as a teenage usher at the town's only movie theater in 1939, Carson laughed at the innocence and naivete of youngsters then, as they watched the lurid celluloid images of the movie Reefer Madness with baffled incomprehension. They had never seen or heard of marijuana, and the movie seemed an irrelevant piece of gory science fiction.

If Johnny Carson had stayed on in Nebraska he might have learned that in 1982 the Midwest Ethic is still alive and well but that many teenagers howl with derisive laughter when Reefer Madness is shown for comic relief at their pot parties. He might have learned, as have many Nebraska parents, that the refreshments at the high school bonfire parties during football season are no longer limited to hot cider and popcorn but often include Quaaludes, marijuana, beer, and grain alcohol. As one disillusioned mother notes, "The only naive people left in Nebraska are the parents who grew up in predrug times who thought the hinterlands were beyond the reach of the 'decadent' coastal fads." Like thousands of other parents from coast to coast, Nebraskans began to open their eyes in 1978 to the adolescent drug epidemic. It had reached the most remote farms as well as the Omaha suburbs. But, just as Johnny Carson remembered, the Midwest Ethic is a powerful force for the protection of children--even in the cynical '70s and '80s.

PRIDE-Omaha

In October 1978 Omaha Superintendent of Schools Vaughn Phelps was keenly aware of growing public dissatisfaction with public education. All over the country citizens were protesting about discipline problems, instructional deficiencies, and escalating taxes to support the schools. Thus, he was surprised by the findings of a 1978 Gallup Opinion Survey entitled "How Americans View the Public Schools." Despite the much-publicized tendency of citizens and the media to blame the schools for society's problems, the survey showed that the great majority of American parents recognized that students' behavioral and attitudinal problems "normally have their origin in the home." Moreover, a majority believed that "unless something is done to correct the home situation, the best efforts of teachers will fail." Therefore, the "next great advance in education will come when parents and teachers work as a team, with parents taking full responsibility for problems that arise at home."

Although Phelps found this recognition of parental responsibility reassuring, what really intrigued him was the Gallup finding that parents wanted help from the schools in order to do a better job of parenting. Their admission of responsibility was not limited to passive guilt or helpless defeatism. In fact, they were willing to pay higher taxes, if necessary, to support educational programs for parents that would better prepare them to instruct and guide their children in critical problem areas. The number one priority among parents of all age groups was that local schools offer courses for parents on "what to do about drugs, smoking, and the use of alcohol." Superintendent Phelps wondered if parents in his district shared the concern and confusion of parents nationwide about their proper role in guiding children through the "chemical culture" of the '70s.

When Phelps next met with his Parents Advisory Council, he asked the members to respond to the Gallup questions and to an informal survey about drug use among local teenagers. Of the 100 mothers who participated, 90 percent thought drug education was one of the three most important topics in a school curriculum, topped only by reading and writing--and ahead of math. Thus, many of the parents were distressed to learn that the district had no formal classes on drug abuse. As one mother recalls, "The schools were in the same predicament as the parents. The teenage drug epidemic developed right under our noses, and we had no game plan to deal with it." Two mothers from West Omaha--Mary Jacobson and Monica Breitinger--volunteered to help develop a drug education

project. Mary Jacobson notes that "Dr. Phelps told us he would give us his support, but only if we made a 5-year commitment. So many people start something like this, and when the ball gets rolling they stop kicking."

During the next months, the two mothers ordered informational materials on drugs and alcohol from local and Federal agencies, and they searched through the libraries. They invited 25 women from their Prairie Lane neighborhood to a weekly study group, which evaluated the piles of drug and alcohol literature. The mothers were disturbed by the contradictions and confusing messages in many of the pamphlets, but they finally culled out three good brochures. As they learned more about the teenage drug scene, the group concluded that improved drug education in the schools was certainly needed, but that parent education was even more important. Thus, while they continued to look for a new curriculum for local schools, they decided to move quickly on developing parent awareness.

Drawing on the Midwest Ethic of strong home, good neighbor, and straight talk, the mothers decided to go door-to-door, bringing their literature and personal conversation to all 717 homes in Prairie Lane. Their community club donated $200 for materials and sent out advance notices in its newsletter that every home would be visited as part of the prevention project. "This was important in avoiding the impression that certain families were being singled out," observes Monica Breitinger. The study group developed a systematic plan for using volunteers and maximizing face-to-face contacts. Six teams of two parents each divided up the homes in the community and began walking the neighborhood in May 1979. Having carefully studied the informational materials, each team member knocked on the doors with a confident, courteous invitation to the householder to join the community education and prevention effort. If the resident showed interest, he or she was invited to a coffee in a private home or to a forthcoming talk by a specialist in the field. (Table 1 illustrates the group's practical mechanism for building a neighborhood network.)

Within 9 months the Prairie Lane teams had reached 80 percent of the community's householders. "We expected to meet some resistance from people who thought we were being nosy or pushy," recalls one volunteer, "but we have been welcomed into every home, without exception." To get parents of younger children and older citizens involved, Monica Breitinger stressed the effect of the youthful intoxication problem on all residents. "Some assumed they wouldn't be affected because their children were toddlers or already grown, but we made it clear that the

TABLE I

ASSISTANCE CHART FOR DOOR-TO-DOOR DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATIONAL PAMPHLETS

Time	Area	Teams	Material	Procedure
We found evenings and Sunday afternoons best. Each team sets its own schedule. We gathered every two weeks to report and brag.....	Define target area. Obtain map from city planning department, courthouse, or draw your own. Get names of residents from school, city directory, or community club.	A team of two works best, two adults or one adult and one teenager -- Rehearse -- Role play: "Hello, I'm _____ and this is _____. We're from the concerned parents group in our area. We have some pamphlets to give you concerning drug and alcohol abuse. Could we visit about five minutes?"	We stamped each pamphlet with our group name and phone number. These pamphlets are currently acceptable -- keep updating your material. 1. Marijuana National Clearinghouse on Drug Abuse Information, Box 1701, Washington, D.C. 20013 2. Reprint of Readers Digest December 1979 article on pot. 3. The Parents Guide to Drug Abuse 1978. Narcotics Education, Inc., 830 Laurel St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20012 4. Alcoholism in Our Society, Nebr. Division on Alcoholism, Dept. of Public Institutions, P.O. Box 94728, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509	Alone or in pairs, we called at homes. We had circled items in each pamphlet. We spoke of and pointed out certain items. We spoke to adults or left material in doors and called back later to discuss. We checked names of people interested in attending an informational coffee. Later we called and invited them to our home, or to ride with us to hear a qualified speaker.

LOG OF DOOR-TO-DOOR CALLS

Team Names	Address of Resident	Name	Note on Reaction	Time
Monica & Mary	3305 So. 115	Smith	If interested in more	7 to 9 p.m., Thursday Evening, August 7, 1979.
	3310 So. 115	Jones	information, get phone	
	3315 So. 115	etc.	number. If not at home	
	3325 So. 115 Av.		make note to call back	
	3330 So. 115 Av.		or phone.	

Each team needs a clearly organized plan of action similar to those outlined in these exhibits to submit to the steering committee, for tracking results, and depicting further action.

ASSISTANCE CHART FOR SPEAKERS AT INFORMATIONAL COFFEES

Date	Time	Host and Hostess	Subject	Guest Speaker
	Vary AM & PM	We use private homes rather	Local Drug Scene	State Patrol Vice Investigator
	10:00 A.M.	than school. At first it was	Local Laws	Police Officer
	1:00 P.M.	the same one or two homes,	Alcohol and Youth	Council on Alcoholism or Alcohol Anonymous
	7:30 P.M.	but gradually others offered their living rooms.	Drugs and Youth	Local Treatment Center
	Limit to 1 or 1½ hours		School Situation	High School Dean of Men and/or Women
	3 Sessions		Decision Making Course	Local authority on effectiveness training in parenting skills.
			Health Implications	Informed physician
			Brain Implications	Qualified educator
				(It's wise to interview speakers first to see if their views are compatible with recent information.)

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environment as a whole does affect them. Maybe their child doesn't have a problem, but the stoned kid driving the car who runs over their mailbox--or over them--may have."

The visitors learned that they had reached some homes too late. One woman came to the door in her bathrobe and greeted the volunteers with a sad story. "I've been waiting for you to come," she said, "and I hope you reach every home in Omaha. My 27-year-old grandson used drugs and is now institutionalized." But in other homes the neighborhood educational effort enabled parents and grandparents to intervene successfully in their youngsters' drug and alcohol use.

A worried grandmother studied the information and recognized the symptoms of drug use in her granddaughter. The girl's parents were baffled and didn't know what to do, so the grandmother determined to break through the girl's wall of denial. She invited her for a visit to another State, and during the 11-hour drive, the grandmother talked, questioned, listened, advised, and cared. When they arrived back home in Omaha, the teenager agreed to go to a diagnostic center. Although the girl was still defiant and expected to bluff her way through, the counselor eventually convinced her that she needed help. After several months in rehabilitation, the girl committed herself to a drug-free life. Now she is grateful to her grandmother and the volunteers of Prairie Lane.

A mother in another neighborhood read about the Prairie Lane project in the newspaper. She and her husband had been so unable to penetrate the web of deception woven by their pot-smoking sons that they had almost given up. The mother telephoned Mary Jacobson and asked if she could come to one of the neighborhood coffees at which a local policeman was scheduled to speak. She returned to the next coffee, featuring a family counselor, with her husband, a bearded, burly, angry-looking man. The Prairie Lane mothers got nervous as he paced the floor. Halfway through the group discussion, the husband blurted out, "Let's don't just talk any more. Let's get some action going. I've got four kids and I suspect that three are on pot. The only one I feel safe about is my 4-year-old!" Feeling emboldened by the marijuana information and the sense that more parents were getting concerned, the couple went back to their community and invited some neighbors and the parents of their sons' friends to their living room.

As the parents began to open up and discuss the drug problem in their community, several began to realize how gullible they had been when they believed their children's alibis and explanations of

suspicious behavior. One father had found a "bong" in the trunk of his son's car, but he was relieved when the 16-year-old said it belonged to "that kid" down the street. Over coffee in his neighbor's house, the father learned that "that kid" down the street had told his parents that the "bong" in his bedroom belonged to the kid up the street. The parents couldn't help laughing, but they knew they were only beginning to uncover the reality of their children's drug-using social world. As the parents said goodnight, another father turned to the hostess and said, "I'm going to go out on a limb with you. I think your 14-year-old son is smoking pot." Hurt but relieved that her own suspicions were confirmed, she was surprised when the neighbor continued, "And I think he's buying it from my son."

As the host couple later recalled, "It may sound perverse, but getting all that out in the open actually thrilled us. If we could get that far in one night of talk, we sensed for the first time that we weren't alone and helpless."

By July 1979 the Prairie Lane project was getting such a positive response that requests for help began to come in from other neighborhoods. Mary Jacobson sensed that they needed a broader, long-range plan if they were going to expand the project. Then she read an article in Prevention Resources, a publication of NIDA's Prevention Branch, entitled "Parent Power in Georgia." Intrigued by the concept of parent peer groups, parent-school teams, and political action plans, she contacted Buddy Gleaton at the PRIDE office, in Atlanta.

"When I heard about Mary's door-to-door project," Gleaton recalls, "I knew that she was a Mom who would get the job done." He was so impressed by what the Prairie Lane group had already accomplished that he invited Mary Jacobson to join him in Washington, D.C. for a presentation on parent action to a NIDA-sponsored conference of State Prevention Coordinators.[2] She then invited Gleaton to Omaha in February 1980 to help develop an independent resource and networking center to serve parents in Nebraska, similar to the PRIDE office in Georgia. The Prairie Lane Elementary School agreed to provide office space for the parent organization, and PRIDE-Omaha officially opened in September.

Monica Breitinger and Mary Jacobson recall that "we had no idea how fast our program would expand. We were soon swamped with calls for help and materials, not only from Omaha but from surrounding States." The mothers called upon more husbands to get actively involved, and, with an increasing number of speakers available, the Omaha PRIDE office sponsored programs at 63

schools within 9 months. A news article headlined "Mom Versus Drugs: Talk is Her Tool," described the impact of the project on one family:

> A 38-year-old West Omaha mother--call her Susan--has spent the last few months getting wise to the drug culture. A year ago, Susan says, her 17-year-old son smoked marijuana. But he's given that up, and the changes in him have been extraordinary.
>
> Susan is an active member of PRIDE, and she claims that her involvement with the group, whose goal is to educate parents about drugs, had a tremendous impact on her family.
>
> "You can't fool kids...you better know what you're talking about," she says. "A lot of parents are very naive. A lot of them don't know anything about drugs and a lot of them don't want to know."
>
> Susan recalls that she told her children that she was joining and began telling them what she learned at meetings. Then she began leaving pamphlets around the house. "They started asking about it. I really didn't do anything. I got informed and I talked to them; that's all you can do."
>
> Susan says that her knowledge made her "calmer" with her children. "They saw me in a different light. I wasn't just all yelling." They were a close family to begin with, but the experience brought them even closer. (3)

As Mary Jacobson observed, Susan's story shows how important it is that "parents know the score. Information may not solve the problem, but lack of information may have contributed to it. One of the biggest problems is parents who don't have opinions, or if they have opinions, they don't have the facts."

In March 1980 the Omaha parent movement gained an important ally when Cece Zorinsky, wife of U. S. Senator Ed Zorinsky, attended the seminar for Congressional wives on adolescent drug use sponsored by the White House. In her newspaper column, "Letter from Washington," published in the West Omaha Sun, she made an urgent plea for drug awareness. "Parents need to be made aware of the problem," she wrote, "and through their involvement and concern they can make a difference." Then she

quoted an Omaha woman who had joined the antidrug movement: "'My son may still sin, but he's not going to enjoy it anymore.'"[4]

Cece Zorinsky was especially shocked by the kiddie drug paraphernalia and comic books displayed by the panelists at the seminar, and she backed the efforts of Nebraska parents to ban drug paraphernalia and drug promotional literature. PRIDE newsletters sent out information on the Federal model law and instructions on who to write in the State legislature. At Omaha's Tech High School the parent group established a hotline that people could call to learn about a pending antiparaphernalia bill, how to get transportation to the State capital to testify, and how to join the letter-writing campaign. Nebraska parents effectively got their antidrug message to their elected representatives, and the bill was passed.

In fall 1980 PRIDE asked the Assistance League of Omaha to join them in organizing several 1-day workshops for parent-school teams. The Assistance League is composed of women of all ages who volunteer to raise funds and work in worthy civic projects. Members are particularly skilled at facilitating workshops and coordinating service projects. The Boys Town Center for Youth Development, the famous home founded by Father Flanagan, offered its facilities for the workshops. Two Omaha businesses, the Mutual Insurance Company and Northwestern Bell Telephone, helped fund the project. Keynote speakers were brought in from other States, and local parents and professionals filled out the program.

Taking as its theme "Parents, Peers, and Pot," the workshop also covered issues of parenting for all age groups. Barbara Wright, a young mother and nurse, discussed "What Do I Tell a Pre-School Child." She talked about the proper administration of childhood medications to avoid developing a "pill for every ill" mentality. She also stressed the importance of healthy nutritional training in children. David Mohler, speaking as "a burned parent," revealed the "Frustrations of a Parent of Teenagers." Local treatment professionals told parents where they could go for help. Most effective of all was the heart-rending talk by an attractive teenager named Cheryl, who quietly and sincerely told the story of her own struggle with alcohol and drugs.

Delivering her first public speech, Cheryl told the attentive parents in the auditorium, "You know, it's all true--about the peer pressure, the rock songs, the bongs, and the 'do drug' messages. I think it's wonderful that you all have come here today to learn how to help kids deal with all that." When she finished her frightening, painful story of what drugs and alcohol

had done to her and her family, she looked out in the audience and found her own parents' tearful faces. "Thanks, Mom and Dad for not giving up on me," she said. "I never could have made it back if you hadn't fought so hard for me." There was not a dry eye in the auditorium when Cheryl let her parents know, for the first time, that they had finally won the battle together. (Later in the month Cheryl and her parents bravely appeared on ABC's "Good Morning, America" show to tell their story of misery and hope to millions of other families.)

Recognizing that Cheryl could be the child of any one of them, the parents left the PRIDE workshop determined to join the movement for drug-free youth. Within weeks, there were active parent groups in 27 schools. PRIDE workers were delighted by the innovation and versatility shown by the different groups, for they do not believe that there is just one prepackaged prevention project. As one newsletter explained:

> Any group of two or ten is a parent group, if you are anxious to become more credible on the subject of alcohol and drugs. There is no need for by-laws or dues, but there is a need for a few committed people. Some groups are subcommittees of PTAs, church groups, or community clubs. Did you know that PRIDE-Omaha began with commitment from two people?

In another newsletter, PRIDE exhorted parents:

> DON'T JUST STAND THERE--DO SOMETHING!
>
> People are amazing. Many who attended the fall Parent-School Team Workshops are doing remarkable things in their areas. Some of the ideas are:
>
> - 5 & 6 grade student-parent pot luck dinners with a speaker.
> - Living room coffee for friendship circle or neighborhood friends.
> - Marijuana slide show presentation to small groups.
> - Omaha Public School is having cluster mini-workshops. Parents from several grade schools met for a motivating meeting. Now these parents can develop a plan to reach other parents in their own school.
> - Scheduling the film "For Parents Only" and giving each parent the two free booklets for parents and kids that accompany the film.

- o Mailing out material to parents who found it impossible to attend a meeting.
- o Giving out drug and parent-teen guideline literature to all parents at school conferences.

Somehow we suspect other creative things have been done. Please share. We are bragging to everyone about the difference you are making. Every ONE person who learns is one person who will make a difference.

The Omaha prevention project stresses effective parenting and the development of family strength as much as drug education. In February 1981 Dr. Stephen Glenn, a nationally known expert in positive youth development, presented workshops on the role of parents and schools in developing more mature, capable, and independent young people. To make clear how critical it can be to rebuild parent and neighborhood networks of guidance and companionship for children, Glenn described many of the negative changes in contemporary family life:

> Here are some of the key transitions in the family. In 1930, a child spent an average of three to four hours a day in interaction, actively involved in relevant experiences with various members of his immediate extended family. How much time did the average ten-year-old or older child in a two-parent family spend last year in interaction with parents in a typical twenty-four hour day? Fourteen and one half minutes of which 12½ minutes were spent with parents' warnings or correcting things that had gone wrong. There were about two minutes available for positive communication, assuming there was no lingering trauma from the previous 12½ minutes. Also the grandmas, grandpas, aunts, uncles, nieces, and nephews have all been removed, and opportunities for relevant experiences with them are lost. Finally, the average family moves every couple of years, so the neighbors do not become significant in that process. We have essentially wiped out many shared relevant experiences through cultural change. (5)

Glenn also pointed out that in 1930, children grew up in "on the job training" for adulthood, for they worked and played with adults and learned problem-solving skills from being actively involved in family tasks. Children today, he pointed out, inhabit

an unstable, ambiguous world compared with the world of 50 years ago.

As the parent education project continued, three Omaha schools implemented, on a trial basis, a comprehensive health curriculum for grades K-6. The Prairie Lane study group helped plan the units on alcohol and drugs. School administrators were pleased with the growing parent activism, for they recognized that stronger families would have a tremendously positive impact on the schools. Thus, many school principals cooperated with PRIDE by sponsoring "Evenings for the Family" programs at the schools. At Morton Elementary School all parents and students in grades 4-6 were invited to the gym to hear a panel on drug abuse that featured the mother of a pot smoker, a young ex-user, a pediatric nurse, and a family counselor. Children in grades K-3 were shown a Walt Disney movie and then divided into small groups with PRIDE volunteers who talked to them about drugs. Each student was given a coloring book with the theme "Only Sick People Need Drugs!"[7] No child was admitted without a parent, and all were encouraged to bring their entire families, relatives, and neighbors.

The family nights were so successful that many schools now host annual suppers called "Pot Luck/Pot Talk." Some parent groups have developed a pledge card to help build parental consistency and commitment in the prevention effort. For example, at Masters Elementary School a letter from the PTA-PRIDE Team was sent out to all parents:

> Parents should be concerned about the increase in drug and alcohol use among our youth and the social acceptability of this use. Young people must be able to feel that it's OK not to participate in the use of drugs or alcohol. We want parents to take a stand to help our youth and we are asking YOU to endorse the following agreement and guidelines.
>
> When parents make a VISUAL (written) commitment and take a stand on an issue, their children are more apt to take it seriously. PARENTS WHO CARE AGREE:
>
> That we will cooperate with schools, law enforcement and young people to create a healthy atmosphere. In order to do this, we agree to the following guidelines:
>
> We will develop and communicate a clear position about drug and alcohol use.

We will not serve drugs or alcohol to others' children.

We will promote wholesome social activities for our youth and will not sponsor or condone social activities we or our children cannot control...

These signed commitments of support will be displayed at the POT LUCK/POT TALK dinner and for the remainder of the school year to illustrate to all of the students at Masters School that PARENTS CARE and will GET INVOLVED in issues that may affect their children.

The PRIDE program stresses the importance of getting involved in education and prevention efforts early, because the potential influence on younger children is much stronger than with older teenagers who have "already slipped through the net." Despite the intimidating defiance of older teenage "party-ers," the program also advises parents of high-school-age youth not to give up and say it's too late. As one incident at an Omaha high school shows, however, parents who take on the teenage partying scene need to gird their loins and maintain their sense of humor to get past the first wave of protests and emotional blackmail.

When a small parent team at one high school made an informal survey of parental attitudes about their teenagers' socializing, the school newspaper published the findings and voiced general approval of the parents' project, which was announced with the theme "Take PRIDE in Your School." But the practical implications of the questions--for example, "Are you awake when your teen comes home?" or "Do you allow drinking at high school parties?"--sent shock waves through the ranks of teenage drinkers and pot smokers. One group of students formed a "Beat PRIDE" organization that circulated protesting flyers throughout the community:

"BEAT PRIDE.....BEFORE IT BEATS YOU!!!!!!!"

We would first like to say that we have absolutely nothing against Mrs. M., Director of PRIDE, or Dr. T., or any other PRIDE member. It's the group itself that we are against! It is what they are doing and believing that we are against! Mrs. M. stated about our flyer that "it makes us sound like we're the Gestapo. It sounds like we're searching rooms, smelling breaths, and taking urine tests. That's not true." But parents do search rooms, smell breaths,

and make their kids take urine tests. It's a fact! Mrs. M. also stated, "All we do is care about kids. We thought we were doing kind of a neat thing." Why do all of the parents of the school have to get together to discuss all of their children? Why can't parents leave their personal problems at home where they belong? Why gang up on us, that's what many students complain about! Many students don't like the idea of PRIDE because it creates many family arguments over this kind of situation!

PARENTS: IF YOUR CHILDREN COME HOME FROM A PARTY AT NIGHT AND LIE TO YOU ABOUT TAKING DRUGS OR USING ALCOHOL, RIGHT THEN AND THERE YOU HAVE EVEN A BIGGER PROBLEM. T R U S T ! ! ! ! ! ! !

PRIDE isn't what you need, TRUST is!

We feel that attending PRIDE meetings is a mere cop-out. One of the most often heard comments of a teenager's parents is, "I don't care what everyone else's parents say, I'm not everyone else's parents." We are not the teenagers of everyone else's parents!!!!! THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR THIS!

LOYALY YOURS (sic)
BEAT PRIDE

Most parents at the high school were amused by the confused logic and took the protest with a grain of salt. But the admission that students do lie about their illegal use of drugs and alcohol also made many parents aware that naive trust or easy rationalizations only serve the cause of the drug culture. Moreover, it was obvious that parent networking and consistent guidelines did indeed have an impact on even the most defiant drug users. The protest by the upperclassmen also motivated the parents of entering ninth-graders to work even harder at implementing guidelines and maintaining open communication between parents and teens. They hoped to prevent the development of such a confrontational attitude when their 14-year-olds became seniors.

In response to the confusion among some students about PRIDE's purposes, the parents increased their efforts at involving more teenagers in the project. Cheryl persuaded many ex-users to help the parents and to accompany them in giving talks to younger kids. "It's rough being a kid today," observes Debbie, a

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21-year-old member of Alcoholics Anonymous who is proud of her 3-year sobriety. "When I was 15, I went through a phase of trying to be cool, so I started smoking cigarettes. But soon it was pot and alcohol too, and I crossed a blurred line from cool to compulsive." After doing volunteer work for PRIDE and AA, Debbie has become increasingly concerned about the young ages at which children today start experimenting with drugs. When she speaks to parents, she urges them to get educated now, no matter what age their children are, so they can communicate openly and confidently on the touchy subjects of alcohol, drugs, and sexuality. "I think it's wonderful that PRIDE focuses on education within the family," she says. "That's the only place it will really work."

To expand the youth education effort, speakers were brought in for programs directed at youngsters as well as parents. Curt Janeczeck, an Ohio medical student who wrote a book for teenagers called Marijuana: Time For a Closer Look, presented a program on the drug messages in rock music and on new biological research.[8] Professor Sam Rhine, from Indiana, presented a popular workshop on "The First Nine Months of Your Life," with a strong focus on genetic and reproductive responsibility. When PRIDE parents speak to fourth- and fifth-graders, they often bring along a "straight" teenager who helps the children see that the drug-free lifestyle is fun and attractive.

In November 1981 PRIDE-Omaha and the Assistance League of Omaha again joined forces to sponsor a five-State drug education conference that drew in hundreds of community leaders, educators, and physicians. The high caliber of the speakers--including such national experts as Robert DuPont, of the American Council on Marijuana; Carlton Turner, from the White House; Gordon Fink, from the Drug Enforcement Administration; and Ian MacDonald, of the Florida Pediatrics Society--led to the endorsement of the conference by the Omaha Medical Society and the medical schools of Creighton University and Nebraska University. Buddy Gleaton and Bill Rudolph explained to school administrators how parents and schools in Atlanta worked together to "turn the drug scene around." Nebraska State Prevention Director Ian Newman, psychiatrist Emmet Kenney, and attorney Sam Cooper provided local information and offered support from their professions.

When Mary Jacobson and Monica Breitinger started knocking on doors in Prairie Lane, their husbands looked upon the project as a nice "neighborhood" activity. Three years and hundreds of drug education meetings later, the husbands and wives have found

themselves in the forefront of the national parent movement. Martin Jacobson often jokes that his wife had everything going for her--good looks, neat kids, and a great husband. "With all of this," he says, "she has gone into drugs!" But when Mary Jacobson was chosen new president of the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth in April 1982, her family and neighborhood were delighted that the "Midwest Ethic" still speaks to the country from the Nebraska hinterland.

NOTES

1. "Johnny Goes Home." Carson Productions, Los Angeles, February 15, 1982.

2. Jacobson, M. "A Neighborhood Plan for Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse." Order from PRIDE-Omaha, 11444 Hascall, Omaha, NE 68144.

3. Lazarus, A. Mom vs. drugs: Talk is her tool. West Omaha Sun, August 14, 1980.

4. Zorinsky, C. Cece makes a plea for drug awareness. West Omaha Sun, April, 1980.

5. Glenn, S. Strengthening the Family. Bethesda, MD: Potomac Press, 1980, p. 5-6.

6. Glenn, S. Strengthening the Family. Bethesda, MD: Potomac Press, 1980. p. 18.

7. National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism. Soozie's Coloring Book. Available from: National Clearinghouse on Alcohol Information, Box 2305, Rockville, MD 20852.

8. Janeczeck, C. Marijuana: Time for a Closer Look. Columbus, Ohio: Healthstar Publications, 1980.

CHAPTER SIX
NEW YORK--PARENT NETWORKING IN NASSAU COUNTY

When Steve Liss read Parents, Peers, and Pot in May 1980, he became intrigued by the possibilities of initiating parent networking in the densely populated but sprawling communities of Nassau County, Long Island. As education director of the Alcohol Valuing Project, run by the county Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction, he had been working for 3 years to educate sixth-graders about the problems of alcohol and ways of handling peer pressure.[1] The program also attempted to reach parents--through their children--to inform them about the hazards of juvenile drinking and the need for responsible role modeling by adults. But Liss recognized that marijuana posed as many problems as alcohol and that few students or parents knew enough about the drug to understand its dangers. As the father of a 13-year-old daughter, he could also sense the intensification of peer pressure to "party" and "get high" that she was already facing.

Thus, Liss approached Commissioner Harold Adams and asked if the Drug and Alcohol Department could sponsor a countywide forum on marijuana as a supplement to its work on alcohol and as a kickoff to a parent education project. The prospect of networking the 56 communities of a county with 1,300,000 people was a bit intimidating in a period of budget cutting. But Liss hoped to keep the project simple and inexpensive by stressing the self-help nature of the parent groups once they had gotten started. He saw the department's role only as a resource center and support system for the parent network.

Commissioner Adams agreed to the proposal, for he sensed that the community would welcome an expansion of the department's prevention efforts. For 8 years the department had coordinated the federally sponsored School Health Curriculum Project, which taught children from kindergarten through seventh grade the health hazards of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, and junk food.[2] As part of the project, parents were brought into the classrooms both as aides and audience.

Pleased to have the commissioner's full support, Liss began looking for community groups to help organize the marijuana forum. Hoping to build a credible health concern as the basis for the networking project, he asked the Nassau County Lung Association to be a cosponsor of the event. The American Lung Association had recently published an excellent update on the effects of marijuana on the lungs, and the local chapter was eager to get involved.[3]

Liss next asked the Nassau/Long Island PTA to cosponsor the forum. Sheila Cohen, district director of the PTA, gladly offered the services of her office to send a strong message on drug abuse prevention. As a mother of teenagers, she knew that parents were not getting enough information on marijuana, and she believed that the 336 local PTA chapters had a better chance of reaching parents directly than any other organization.

Recalling the initial meeting of the three sponsoring groups, Liss says, "We knew our goals were important, even urgent. But we also knew the obstacles. The vast majority of adults were apathetic about the drug problem. Or, worse, they accepted it either as the norm or unbeatable." In reading about the parent groups in Georgia and Florida, Liss was impressed by the practical, sustained action they generated. He knew that such direct involvement by large numbers of parents was what his department's preventive efforts badly needed if they were to succeed in their goal of increasing the numbers of healthy, drug-free children. With this in mind, the coalition planned a public forum featuring Professor George Russell, author of Marijuana Today,[4] an official from the Drug Enforcement Administration, a parent leader from Georgia, and local professionals.

To draw a big crowd the department printed up 6,000 brightly colored flyers. Each participating organization sent them out through its mailing list and to related agencies, and an extensive publicity campaign was undertaken in all the media. Having done all they could to bridge the "apathy gap," the planners crossed their fingers and hoped the days of parent complacency were over.

Garden City Community Awareness Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (CAAD)

While preparing for the countywide forum, Sheila Cohen explored local efforts that were already under way. Through PTA contact with Gerri Newman in Garden City, an affluent suburb just 6

miles from Steve Liss' office, Cohen learned that parents there were already hard at work on a community prevention project. Eager to learn more about the strategies of the year-old effort, she, Liss, and the other planners attended a Garden City "Town Meeting" held a month before the Nassau County forum. When he heard the Garden City story, Liss recognized that neighborhood parent leaders like Gerri Newman and Marilyn Falvey could be real catalysts to the countywide network project.

Garden City's prevention program began in summer 1979, when three parents became disturbed by the visible evidence--such as littered bottles and senseless vandalism--of youthful alcohol abuse in the comm nity. When they asked local police if the problem was serious, the officers replied, "Yes--and getting worse." As the parents investigated further, they were surprised to learn that many youngsters also experimented with illegal drugs, especially marijuana. The parents took their information and concerns to a meeting of school administrators, PTA leaders, and the police department's youth officer. They decided to join forces to combat the problem. Throughout the fall, under the leadership of school superintendent Dr. Robert Gardner, the group sought out support from other community leaders. By January 1980 the Community Awareness Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (CAAD) project was formally organized, with Dr. Gardner as chairman. The organizers emphasized, however, that adolescent drug and alcohol use was not just a school problem but a matter of communitywide responsibility.

The CAAD committee then implemented an investigation of community needs in order to design a comprehensive action plan. Subcommittees were appointed to study community awareness and education needs, the school curriculum, vandalism, alternative activities, public relations, and a code of conduct. A speakers' bureau was established to address as many weekly meetings of local organizations as possible. Represented on the CAAD Committee were local colleges, property owners associations, the PTA, the school district, the police department, the recreation commission, private schools, civic clubs, and other organizations. This all-out support from a cross section of the community was an important ingredient in the credibility and effectiveness of the project.

CAAD member Marilyn Falvey, Mayor Daniel Duffy, and other residents wrote weekly articles in the community newspaper to generate concern. Sports figures spoke out in support of family awareness efforts. A local coach offered a half-scholarship to a soccer camp as a door prize to encourage young people and parents to attend the project's community education series.

By May 1980 the committee felt that a community survey of parental and teenage attitudes and concerns would be useful for developing a long-range action plan. Thus, a questionnaire was mailed out to all Garden City householders, and a similar one was distributed to students in grades 7-12 in all the schools.[5] More than 600 adults mailed in their answers, and 2,000 students filled out the survey. The results provided provocative insights into the gap between parental awareness and teenage reality. For example, two questions revealed parents' naivete about unchaperoned parties:

> Is it a commonly accepted practice for parents of teenagers to call the host parent to confirm party arrangements?
> - o 63 percent of the adults say "sometimes"; 45 percent of the students say "sometimes."
> - o 27 percent of the adults say "never"; 50 percent of the students say "never."

> When teenagers attend parties in your home, is there adult supervision?
> - o 94 percent of the adults say "always"; 31 percent of the students say "always."
> - o 6 percent of the adults say "sometimes"; 50 percent of the students say "sometimes."
> - o 0 percent of the adults say "never"; 20 percent of the students say "never."

Surprisingly, a majority of the teenagers wanted more supervision, stricter rules, and consistent law enforcement.

The survey sent a clear message that most parents and young people wanted to change the drug and alcohol scene in Garden City. Thus, the committee proposed an "Old Fashioned Town Meeting to Confront Modern Problems" for November 3, 1980. After a keynote address, workshops would focus on an update of marijuana research, the effects of alcohol on adolescent development, vandalism, early childhood development, and related topics. A special workshop, "For Youth Only--Grades 7 to 11," was facilitated by Garden City youth ministers. It featured a 20-year-old recovered alcoholic and counselors from New York City's Phoenix House, a drug rehabilitation center.

To generate a big turnout for the town meeting, flyers were sent out through schools, churches, and businesses. Local businesses and civic groups contributed toward the expenses. Displays were set up at the public library and in a bank. A booth was manned by CAAD members at a community fair in October. As a result,

more than 700 adults and young people attended. "It set the whole community abuzz with excitement," recalls Marilyn Falvey. "The community had not turned out in such numbers for any event in several years."

The growing concern led to a packed room for the workshop on developing social guidelines for parents and students. As one participant recalls, there was initially much heated discussion. "Some parents ventilated hostile feelings about the role of the school in preventing drug and alcohol use. Rumors were tossed around and the meeting stalled." But the parents were determined to come up with a constructive game plan, and they requested that the moderator arrange another meeting on guidelines. More than 100 parents returned for it. This time a group of parents who had visited the schools--at the administrators' request--reported on what they had learned. This helped to narrow the communication gap between parents and schools.

Moreover, the school principals now actively participated in the guidelines meetings, and a practical consensus was achieved. Using Atlanta's Northside High School guidelines as a takeoff point, the Garden City group added a few practical pointers and a more positive definition of discipline. For example, for families of junior high school students, "Parents should know where their children are during non-school hours. 'Hanging out' or loitering with no apparent purpose is discouraged. Teenagers should have a definite purpose and place to go with a specific time of return." Moreover, for dances and other school/social events, "Teenagers should be accountable for observing the rules regarding such affairs, such as being present within the specified areas prescribed." Parents were also encouraged to make clear arrangements for transportation ahead of time.

For senior high students the guidelines stated that "Alcohol and other drugs should not be available or served; even children over 18 should not be allowed to have alcohol at mixed-aged parties." Discipline was defined as "the training that corrects, molds, and perfects the mental faculties or moral character." Parents were urged to discuss the guidelines with their children and explain that they were being enforced lovingly to help the youngsters deal with negative peer pressure. Parents wanted them to grow into healthy, productive, and independent young adults who could "fly the nest and make it on their own." Copies of the guidelines and suggestions for forming a parent group were mailed to parents of all students in grades 7-12 in public and parochial schools just before the Christmas holidays. Forms asking for a commitment to form a parent network were included in the mailing. (When 35 enthusiastic replies were returned, the

committee then contacted the potential parent leaders and offered them further information and support.)

At the third guidelines workshop a form letter was developed for parents who wished to inform their principals that they supported school communication and intervention relating to any behavioral problems:

> As concerned parents who are becoming more aware of the problems which might affect our youngster(s), we want to express our support of you and other school officials with respect to the implementation of rules and procedures at the school.
>
> Our children, _____, currently attend the _____ school. Specifically, we want to go on record, and we ask you to inform each of his/her teachers of our firm support of school policies and rules.
>
> We request that each of his/her teachers be informed of our desire to support and be responsible to their observations and reports of any unusual or inappropriate behavior, particularly with respect to alcohol and drugs.

More than 150 parents sent the letter in immediately, and many more followed suit after the letter was published in the newspaper. Teachers expressed great relief at this strong show of support for what is always a difficult diagnostic and intervention job.

In January 1981 "Town Meeting II" was held on a night of near-zero temperatures. But more than 350 people turned out to hear a program called "Assessing the Local Scene." Dealing with the topic of "Subliminal Seduction," a youth officer displayed drug paraphernalia confiscated from local young people, and Reverend Peter Sweisgood, of the Long Island Council on Alcoholism, discussed the impact of beer and wine advertising on young TV viewers. Sweisgood pointed out the susceptibility of immature youngsters to the association of beer drinking with manliness, and wine drinking with sexiness, at a time when they were confused about their own identities and eager to seem older. Another segment of the program, "Sights and Stuff," featured four senior high school students, who discussed the social pressures and confusions that teenagers face, especially in junior high school. The students appealed to parents to try to understand peer pressure but not to overlook it--"It's real and cannot be ignored."

Then a mother reported on the parent network system that was developing out of the guidelines meetings. A panel of parents recounted their experiences--many humorous and some depressing--when they telephoned other parents to get together to discuss networking. A display of blownup copies of the guidelines and signup sheets was featured. The speaker concluded that they were all aiming at a new "social contract" among parents, teens, and the community that would lead to a healthier, safer, and more rewarding lifestyle for families in Garden City.

As parent networking gained momentum, parents in different grade levels decided to focus on forthcoming social events that had generated problems in the past. For example, several parents of fifth-graders were concerned about potential problems at slumber parties. Thus, they developed a plan for dealing with "lights out" times, pranks, R-rated movies shown on late-night TV, and similar issues. Parents of sixth-graders hoped to delay boy-girl parties, which seemed to push children prematurely into sophisticated socializing. In March the parents of a graduating senior began hosting meetings to discuss how they could cooperate to make the forthcoming prom-graduation weekend a happy and safe one for their children. Helped by suggestions from the high school principal, Joseph Prusan, and parents of older teens who had already experienced the problems of graduation weekend, the group of 100 parents came up with several suggestions.

First, parents should help seniors understand that graduation is an important event for the whole family--those who love the graduating students and have nurtured them over 18 years, including parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles. The group suggested eliminating the parties that took place in the few hours between graduation ceremonies and the PTA-sponsored dinner dance, pool party, and breakfast, and replacing them with "family celebrations" with younger siblings and visiting relatives. Second, the problem of some students' getting drunk before the prom, which had occasionally led to trouble at the dance and accidents afterward, would be greatly reduced. Rumors of these parental plans stirred up a storm of protest by many seniors who worried that the fun of graduation would be spoiled.

Thus, a general meeting was called at the high school. It was chaired by the principal, class officers, and parent leaders and followed by small discussion groups. "When enough seniors were persuaded that CAAD was not a cad," one mother notes, "and not out to ruin their fun, then the kids became a positive help in making the new-style celebration work." When principal Prusan

sent out a letter to parents of seniors just before graduation weekend, asking for cooperation regarding the new rules of behavior, more than 130 parents offered to sign it as a show of support. The mother of class president and Presidential Scholar John Garibaldi reports that the student acceptance--and even leadership--of a family-oriented graduation led to the liveliest and most appreciated senior prom in years. As one chaperone recounts, "A few gin bottles still turned up in the restroom, but the overall student behavior was exemplary."

The seniors of 1982 began working with parents and administrators to address the problem of "senioritis." The teenagers said they would like more parent participation in school activities, especially in developing vocational skills and contacts through yearbook work, fundraising for "feed the hungry" projects, career exploration, and similar activities. By helping seniors take a clear-eyed, "hard look" into the future, parents in Garden City have great hopes that their fine young men and women will form their own generational counter-movement to the self-indulgent chemical trends of the past.

Certainly the Student Council seniors who initiated a program called "Getting Ready for High School" for middle school students made a great impression. The seniors' frank descriptions of confusing peer pressures and sticky social situations that the younger kids would face, coupled with strong encouragement to be independent, to maintain self-control, and to "avoid the whole mess of booze, dope, and vandalism," were enthusiastically received. A peer leadership program has been greatly expanded, with juniors and seniors visiting every seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade social studies class during the 1981-82 school year.

Students also worked with school personnel and parents to plan an "Awareness Day" in all public and parochial schools in March 1982. Time was set aside from the regular schedule in each school for students to hear from experts in medicine, sports, law enforcement, and counseling, as well as representatives from volunteer agencies with ideas for activities. A "Parents Prep Night" gave parents up-to-date information on drugs and alcohol so they could discuss the Awareness Day material with their children and emphasize the cooperation between home and school.

While the parent networking and student leadership projects were developing, a followup workshop on vandalism led to the formation of a special task force headed by the Village Administrator. A series of news articles called "Know the Law"

was written by a CAAD representative, who described specific instances of vandalism and local and State ordinances. The newspaper agreed to the task force's recommendation that all acts of juvenile criminal mischief be published, along with exact locations and costs of damage. Citizens saw the weekly lists of local streets and shopping areas, followed by concrete descriptions: youths ringing doorbells, windows smashed, autos driven across yards, painted graffiti, auto antennas broken, car windows shot out by BB guns, bottles broken on steps, and similar occurrences. But as the news articles pointed out:

> None of these incidents took place in a hurry. Evidence showed the vandals spent a long time doing their destruction. The questions arise: How many people passed by. . .? How many drove past. . .? The police cannot be everywhere, but 25,000 residents are many places. An alert resident passing by could have reported suspicious noises or actions in the area. . . Instead of shaking our heads and wringing our hands at vandalism statistics, let's get courageous and dare to take Garden City back from the vandals! (6)

Increasingly concerned citizens worked with the police and property owners associations to establish "Neighborhood Watch" programs. As merchants became alerted to the linkage between alcohol use and vandalism, shoplifting, and burglary, they worked with CAAD to develop a "Responsible Sellers Club." Members of the Chamber of Commerce contacted all licensed beverage dealers to ask for cooperation with the community prevention project. Cooperating merchants were given decals to display in their windows.

The effectiveness of these combined communitywide efforts is clearly evident in the dramatic decline in acts of vandalism in the community---559 in 1979, 511 in 1980, 407 in 1981, and 174 in the first six months of 1982.

When Superintendent of Schools Robert Gardner was asked to chair the CAAD organization, he recognized that he was taking on a big job--on top of an already busy schedule. But Gardner was the father of teenagers himself, and he felt a personal commitment to get more parents mobilized against increasingly negative cultural pressures on young people. As Gardner observes, "Our society and schools have brought all these children together and, in a sense, pushed them into a unified tribal organization. At the same time, parents are not organized as a group. Parents have little sense of behavioral consensus for their teenagers, while the youngsters develop a consensus from

their peers, the media, and the commercial pop-culture." Gardner and his principals are delighted by the impact of parent networking, both at home and in school. "Where there was no sense of community before, there now is--especially because of the parent-teen guidelines," Gardner says. "Parents are finding support among themselves for their best instincts. Significantly, there is also a heightened awareness and interest among students, who are working constructively with their peers."

Dr. Gardner urges other superintendents and principals to reach out to parents and the larger community--"It's a rewarding experience to be part of a process that improves the quality of life for students, families, and neighborhoods."

Nassau County Forum on Marijuana

When the representatives of the Nassau County Drug and Alcohol agency, the Lung Association, and the PTA arrived at the State University at Farmingdale on November 19, 1980, they had high hopes for a big turnout for the countywide marijuana forum. Despite the nay-sayers in some of the bureaucracies, Steve Liss had been impressed by the enthusiastic response to the Garden City town meeting and the report of what the CAAD group had accomplished in just one year. Thus, when more than 350 people from many different communities showed up for the program, asked intensive questions, and emptied the display boxes, the sponsors were delighted. Representatives from eight different school districts volunteered to initiate parent networking in their home areas. When a skeptic asked Liss if eight volunteers justified all the work and expense of organizing the forum, he answered, "Emphatically, yes. If two parents had agreed to start a parent network, we'd have been satisfied. Two successful community groups, acting as role models in the future, are enough for a good beginning." Significantly, at the county forum Garden City parents offered to lend assistance and materials to any new networks.

Pleased by the public response, Commissioner Adams assigned Steve Liss to spend half his time as departmental coordinator on the network project (his other time would remain with the Alcohol Valuing project) and allowed him to hire Anita Schanback as full-time liaison between the department and the parent networks. With the secretarial help and informational capacities of the department at the disposal of the parent groups, the Nassau County agency gave an enormous boost to fledgling groups. Within 18 months there were 12 major parent organizations.

When the department, the Lung Association, and the PTA again joined forces to sponsor training workshops for network leaders in April, May, September, and November 1981, the three organizations were amazed by the energy, versatility, and perseverance of the groups. They also perceived that a key to success was the development of a positive working relationship between parent groups and school administrators. Where school officials not only welcomed parent involvement but even initiated parent awareness meetings, the communities were able to make significant and rapid progress. But where school officials "stonewalled" or reacted defensively, parent groups became frustrated and sometimes hostile. In two of the best community organizations, in fact, school personnel took the first steps in alerting parents.

Networking in Manhasset, Long Island

In fall 1979, in the affluent community of Manhasset, school superintendent Dr. Donald Grote and assistant superintendent Don Harkness discussed their growing concern about youthful drug and drinking problems. Although there had been no dramatic incident in Manhasset schools to trigger their concern, both men had listened to reports from John Imhof, who runs the Chemical Dependency Unit at nearby North Shore Hospital, about increasing admissions of local youngsters. They also heard reports from principals who suspected that more students were using marijuana, although it was hard to pin down proof. As Don Harkness recounts, "Dr. Grote and I vaguely sensed there was a serious problem among our young people, even though we had little in-school evidence. We hoped to get ahead of the game, by developing a plan before we had an overdose or car wreck to shock us into action."

The two administrators voiced their concerns to the board of education. The board then presented a directive to the prestigious Citizens' Advisory Committee on Education to develop guidelines and standards for use by parents to help them deal with teenage drug and alcohol use. Specifically, the board asked the committee to explore effective programs in other communities and then to recommend a plan for Manhasset.

In March 1980 the committee came back to the Board of Education with a comprehensive report. It included the historical background and social mechanisms of the drug and drinking epidemic, an update on research, and a suggested set of parent-school-community guidelines. The report noted that the adolescent marijuana epidemic "could not have occurred at a worse time in the unhappy evolution of the American family":

> Many children now return, after school, to an empty house or to a house only with other children. Responsibility for nurturing children has passed increasingly to other institutions than the family--to the schools, for example, which are burdened, almost daily, with new demands levied upon them by an anxious and guilt-ridden society; to the churches, which likewise find their congregational holding power slipping through their fingers; and to television, which often, for lack of a better alternative, becomes a surrogate--and in most cases inadequate surrogate--parent. All of this results in increasing numbers of youngsters, white and black, who grow older without parental guidance most of the day, possess few saleable skills, are burdened with few required duties, and are accountable to no one. Nevertheless, despite the very real vulnerability of the American home, the family remains the one resource capable of coping with the problems. No other institution has either the motive or the means. (7)

The Board of Education agreed to alert and mobilize parents as the major force in a communitywide prevention effort. The Manhasset Youth Council appointed Judge Robert Roberto to head a subcommittee on drug and alcohol abuse, and the council and school district offered to help with financial support. As Don Harkness notes, "We were determined that our project would be ongoing and long-range; we didn't want a 'one-shot' affair or a two-day extravaganza, which serves primarily to whet appetites, and then disappoints expectations and frustrates good intentions." The effort was launched in May 1980 with a showing of the film For Parents Only at a community meeting.

When more than 750 parents showed up, out of a school population of 2,200, the committee knew they had struck a responsive chord. Followup meetings focused on alcohol problems and parent networking. To overcome the tendency of many parents in an affluent, attractive community to deny that their "nice kids" could be involved in drug or alcohol abuse, a teacher prepared a slide show with taped interviews of Manhasset youngsters--telling in their own words about the "get high" party scene and the problems of peer pressure. In the summer the local youth council offered a full series of family education workshops called SHOP (Summer at Home Opportunities Program) for parents of children from kinder-

garten through early college. A steady stream of announcements and articles in the Schools in Action bulletin, which is mailed monthly by the school district to all Manhasset residents, assured a widening audience. A bumper sticker reading "Parent Power: Each One, Reach One" also caught the eye of many residents.

But most important, Richard Schutte, chairman of the special committee and a respected business and civic leader, went to all the religious leaders and asked for their help in getting out the message. Schutte estimates that two thirds of the audiences came because they were urged to do so by their ministers and rabbis--both from the pulpit and in church bulletins. The next stage, which will be the longest in the project, was the formation of grade-level parent networks and the publication of a parent-to-parent newsletter. The schools urged all parents to join these grade-level groups, which were facilitated by child guidance experts and school counselors supplied by Steve Liss' county office. The committee planned a continuing effort at updating all parents of sixth-graders, every year, about problems and situations that adolescents might face.

After the successful series of parent meetings, the committee decided it was time to include students in the community effort. In May 1981 an all-day youth rally was held that featured Brian Trottier, the star hockey player of the championship New York Islanders and a great hero to local youngsters. As one father recounts, "Brian's heartfelt account about his own ways of avoiding drugs and alcohol, despite constant temptation, made a strong impression on the teenagers. His obvious happiness and enthusiasm, not to mention his superb athletic ability, made a drug-free lifestyle seem very attractive." Trottier's talk was followed by workshops led by high school seniors for seventh- and eighth-graders of the public and parochial schools. These were so well received by the youngsters that a continuing program of peer counseling will be implemented, with high schoolers conducting sessions for fifth- and sixth-graders on tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

As in all parent networking projects, the litmus test for effectiveness is how individuals respond to specific problems. In Manhasset a test case arose when several middle school parents voiced concerns about forthcoming plans for Halloween. The previous year had seen much petty vandalism, kids wandering the streets after dark, unsupervised partying, and sparse attendance at the school-sponsored party. In September 1981, however, parent network members began planning ahead to have an extra-special school party. They notified all parents about the potential problems of kids out on the streets at night, as well as

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the network guidelines on drugs, alcohol, transportation, and hours. Eventually an informal but nearly unanimous consensus emerged among parents, in which the message to children was, "If you don't attend the Halloween party at the school, you will stay home." As a result, the party was a great success and neighborhood vandalism was significantly reduced. The positive improvement in the Halloween weekend encouraged parents of seniors to begin working on guidelines and new options for the 1982 graduation weekend and prom.

Encouraged by the growing impact of parent power after 2 years, the Manhasset committee now advocates "Parent Networking: Each One, Bring Five." The community leaders are particularly encouraged by the changing attitudes of young people. As Harkness notes, "We've moved past that awkward and painful period when the kids thought the adults were nothing but a bunch of narcs. Now, there's a grudging respect for the community's efforts--even among the older teenagers. In fact, the eleventh- and twelfth-graders are urging us to do a lot more with the younger kids--and they want to help."

* * * * *

For Steve Liss the accomplishments of the 12 parent groups already started in Nassau County are encouraging. He recognizes that many drug and alcohol professionals look skeptically on the emerging parent activists, sometimes out of mere "turf guarding" but at other times with genuine concern. The Nassau County department heard many criticisms from colleagues when the network project began. It was too simplistic, some critics said. Worried parents were looking for "the solution" when the problem was too complex for just one right answer. Others were worried that parents might feel science wasn't moving fast enough and would make up their own "facts" or that they might decide to begin censoring books.

The experience of the Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction over the past 2 years has been positive and rewarding, however. Steve Liss urges other agencies to welcome parent involvement as an important--perhaps the most important--element in prevention and treatment efforts. Says Steve Liss, "Concerned parents linking up in collective action--it's an idea whose time has come."

NOTES

1. For information, write to "Alcohol Valuing Project," Nassau County Department of Drug and Alcohol Addiction, 175 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, Long Island, NY 11550.

2. U. S. Centers for Disease Control. School Health Curriculum Project. Atlanta: U.S. Centers for Disease Control, 1978. For information about the project contact: Center for Health Promotion and Education, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, GA 30333, 404/329-3111, ext. 3115.

3. Doyle, N.C. Marijuana and the lungs. American Lung Association Bulletin, November 1979.

4. Russell, G. Marihuana Today: A Compilation of Medical Findings for the Layman. Rockville, MD: American Council on Marijuana, 1978. Order from American Council on Marijuana, 6191 Executive Blvd., Rockville, MD 20852.

5. For copies of the questionnaire and guidelines, write CAAD Project, Garden City Public Schools, 56 Cathedral Avenue, Garden City, NY 11530.

6. Garden City News, September 9, 1980. On alcohol awareness.

7. Report of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Education to the Board of Education, March 17, 1980. Write to Don Harkness, Manhasset Public Schools, Manhasset, NY 11030.

CHAPTER SEVEN
WASHINGTON, D.C.
BECOMING SOMEBODY SPECIAL
IN THE INNER CITY

Within 15 minutes of the corridors of power and imposing monuments of official Washington, D.C., a 13-year-old black youth, Keith Pettigrew, was growing up in a very different world in 1977. Although Keith felt secure and confident in his own home, it worried him to see clusters of teenagers on the corners, smoking pot and cutting school. All around him were youngsters who thought they had nothing to lose because they had nothing to gain.

Keith had recently seen a film at school on what drugs can lead to--infected sores on arms, needle tracks, cold turkey withdrawal, anguished death--and he was scared of the "get high" world of the streets. Besides, he was feeling great about himself because he and three buddies had just won a talent show with their musical rendition of a popular song called "Schoolboy Crush." With the eager fantasies of a talented seventh-grader, Keith dreamed of "making it to the big time." Yet a few months later the group was shocked to learn that one of their best friends had gotten into drug-related trouble. Keith especially was devastated. "We were all so close," he recalls, "and seeing him get wasted like that really hurt."

Watching the young dealers working the neighborhoods and seeing kids in elementary school smoking joints, Keith began to worry about his own little brother, DeVon, just 6 years old. Feeling that somebody had to get a message to young children, Keith wrote a play called "Stay in School" and asked the elementary school principal if he and his friends could present it. "Not unless you can find an adult sponsor," responded the principal. "Not just you kids."

Keith wondered where he could find an adult sponsor in a neighborhood where most of the mothers were single and worn

out by long days at work and long evenings of scrambling to get food on the table, clothes washed, and children tended. He knew there was one person who would never let him down, no matter how overworked or exhausted she was--his mother. For Vonneva Pettigrew, Keith's request that she sponsor the production of the play was an invitation to another big job on top of her full-time work with the National Child Day Care Association. She accepted, though, because she was frightened by the drug world that had taken so many young people away from their parents and from their own potential. So many families she knew, including her own, had been nearly destroyed by drugs. Thus, she opened up her basement to Keith and his friends, gathered costumes, hosted rehearsals, and applauded proudly when the 13-year-old boys performed their antidrug play in two assemblies at the elementary school.

The reaction of the children--in the cast and in the audience--was so enthusiastic that mother and son decided to organize more shows. They put on plays and musical events in parks, churches, and community centers. Each time more and more kids joined the group and clamored for chances to write, sing, dance, build sets, and perform--"to be somebody special," recalls Vonneva Pettigrew. Within a year she and Keith decided to develop an organization for young people called Talent, Inc. The purpose was spelled out in flyers sent around the community in fall 1978: "To seek and participate in creative and wholesome programs which are alternatives to juvenile delinquency, teenage pregnancies, and drug and alcohol use."

Vonneva Pettigrew felt good about the youngsters' eager response to Talent, Inc., but she was disappointed that so few parents joined her. "Everybody was glad that I was doing it for their kids," she says, "but hardly anybody really pitched in." In the meantime her basement full of busy kids was like a lonely island in the spreading sea of the drug problem. Worried about the steady deterioration of the inner-city black community, she yearned for a mechanism that would involve larger numbers of black families.

When Mrs. Pettigrew received an invitation to a Family Forum sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse in May 1980, she was pleased by the recognition accorded to Talent, Inc., but she didn't really expect the meeting to be relevant to the needs of her neighborhood. Representatives of parent groups--mainly white, middle-class, and suburban--who had recently joined together to form the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth were to meet with prevention directors from the State alcohol and drug abuse agencies. Much to her surprise,

Mrs. Pettigrew heard from parents assembled from all over the country the same concerns about the drug epidemic that disturbed her and her sons. She was glad to learn about the new informational materials on marijuana, which confirmed with scientific facts her instinctive fear of the drug. But mainly she was stirred by the parents' accounts about how they had organized to fight back. The parent group concept was a method that anyone could utilize, regardless of racial, economic, or educational background. Vonneva Pettigrew brought an important message to the parents of the suburbs: Help your child and your neighbor's child feel useful, responsible, and special through exercising their talents. In turn, she received an important message from them: Parents united are stronger than the drug culture.

When Mrs. Pettigrew returned home she immediately called several of her friends and told them about the new medical information and about the parent group concept. She asked them to join with her to form Parents and Youth Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse (PYADA), an organization that would merge Talent, Inc. with a parent education project.[1] "Boy, did those mothers ever pitch in," she recalls. "The whole idea of a mother-to-mother communication network struck a responsive chord." Her friends agreed with her that parents had to become mobilized or their children hardly stood a chance against the allure of chemical euphoria and easy money from drug dealing.

In fall 1980 the five mothers who started PYADA began to hold parent meetings, drawing on their contacts in Head Start, PTAs, churches, and other community organizations. However, as one parent recalls, "Even with the evidence of drug use staring them in the face--reefers and rolling papers openly hawked in the streets, pushers taunting people in the streets, junkies nodding against walls--most parents met our appeals with denial. They firmly believed that their children would never get involved with drugs." The PYADA group would not give up; instead they did anything they could to get parents to come to a meeting. "I guess I kind of threatened them," laughs Vonneva. "I told them that white folks out in the suburbs were organizing parent groups to drive the pushers out of their communities, so now more and more of them would be moving to ours." When a local TV station asked to film a segment on PYADA for a documentary entitled "Your Children/My Children," the mothers asked them to come to the PYADA parent meeting. "We told the parents and kids that they would be on TV," remembers another organizer with amusement, "and against all odds we got a packed house for that critical early meeting. They were a concerned and angry group too."

PYADA had invited a staff member of a public agency to address the meeting. Notes one parent, "I guess we really put him on the spot, with the TV cameras there and a full house of people asking tough questions." The organizers were surprised and disappointed that the speaker could not give them any reading materials to distribute to families. Therefore, early in the meeting the parents sensed that they would have to go it alone in developing a parent-based prevention project, especially since the first speaker said most resources were already earmarked for treatment and rehabilitation. But the organizers had also invited Dolores Finger Wright, director of the Department of Drug and Alcohol Concern of the United Methodist Church, and Bernard Redd and John Garcia, of the Center for Multicultural Awareness (CMA).* These speakers answered many of the parents' questions about the adolescent drug problem and praised them for getting involved. The group continued to use them as resources later on.

Vonneva Pettigrew had already heard at the NIDA meeting about the prevention work going on all over the country, and she had seen stacks of good literature on display. Thus, she and Barbara Fusilier made the 30-mile drive to NIDA's offices in Rockville and then to other agencies, gathering printed materials for their community meetings. "I used to get mad at my kids when they left books and papers lying all over the house, but now I kept the car, kitchen, and living room loaded with pamphlets," laughs Mrs. Fusilier.

As they worked to expand their project, the PYADA parents began to get an uneasy feeling about the relationship of local parents to public agencies and the school system. They were surprised to learn that there was only one drug abuse prevention coordinator assigned to work with all the public schools in the city. They also felt that too many of the public projects designed to help disadvantaged children operated on the erroneous assumption that parents are incompetent or uncaring--therefore, parents were excluded from participating in educational or remedial efforts. One mother recounted bitterly that when her foster child was placed in a special education class, a school psychologist had the boy keep a private journal of his family experiences. "I love that boy and I'm doing the best I can to raise him," says the mother ruefully, "but that psychologist would not let me see the journal or even discuss it,

*The Center for Multicultural Awareness was created by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) to provide drug abuse prevention methods and resources to multicultural communities and was funded by NIDA between 1975 and 1982.

when I'm the one who needs to understand what's bothering him." Another mother began scheduling weekly discussions with her four children. "As we got to talking more frankly about drugs, vandalism, and other problems, my youngest one opened up and told me about an extortion ring among first-graders," she says. "But when I went to the principal about it he branded me a troublemaker and told me to stay out of the school's business."

The initial rebuffs and disappointments from what one mother calls "all those external forces" only intensified the PYADA parents' determination to regain control over their children's environment. By early 1981 Barbara Fusilier had arranged a meeting with her school's PTA president and executive board. The PYADA representatives described in vivid terms the extensiveness of the drug dealing scene, updated the PTA members on the health hazards of marijuana, and urged them to help organize parents to fight back. At last the reception they received was enthusiastic. "Those PTA members weren't bureaucrats... They're parents too, and they were just as troubled as we were about all the things the kids are exposed to," says one of the PYADA parents. PTA and PYADA members began talking to parents when they brought their children to the parks to play, and volunteer parent patrols began walking the schoolyards and playgrounds. Other parents offered to help chaperone the youth centers. At a parochial school the nuns and parents alerted the police to drug activity in the vicinity and asked for more visible police patrols. As the drug awareness meetings continued in different parts of the community, more parents began walking their children to and from school. "It's working so well now," says one organizer, "that in some areas we've practically got a traffic jam of parents coming for their kids."

By spring 1981, as PYADA workers learned more about the extent of drug use among young adults who were now parents, they realized that their project needed a strong emphasis on "responsible role modeling." Many of the parents who had grown up in the era of "recreational drug use" continued to smoke pot while caring for their children. "But they love those kids, just like we older parents do," says one PYADA volunteer, "so we built in drug education sessions for young parents."

At one point a worried mother who could not convince her husband to stop smoking pot contacted PYADA for help. As a result, the family was invited to attend a meeting that featured an open discussion about the harmful effects of marijuana and the responsibility of parents to try to provide a safe, healthy environment in which their children could grow and thrive. At

first the father argued and defended pot as harmless. Heroin and cocaine were the problems, he said. But he also began grudgingly to reexamine his image as a role model for his son. "We stress how much these kids need a father figure to look up to and that a parent's influence, whether negative or positive, will be the most important of anybody's on the child's development," says Vonneva Pettigrew. The PYADA members do not accuse or criticize drug-using parents; instead they appeal to their sense of love and responsibility as parents of children who desperately need positive role models. "When a parent condones an illegal act--even when it's just smoking an occasional reefer--the kids really get confused," points out one mother. "They become more vulnerable to all the little 'starter crimes' of street life."

As PYADA's activities expanded, whole families became involved. Children's activities were an important part of the meetings and, often paying out of their own pockets, PYADA organizers provided the children with peanut butter, crackers, and juices. The evenings turned out to be so much fun that in late spring the organization sponsored family baseball games in which the younger children dressed up as cheerleaders and whistled and banged away. They planned to extend the family sports events as more parent groups formed so that neighborhood competitions could be held.

In 1981 Vonneva Pettigrew was invited to attend the board meeting of the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth, in Atlanta, Georgia. After spending a day with Bill Barton and the other representatives, who were discussing the future plans of the parent movement, she accepted a position on the board and agreed to seek out other ethnic board members. Subsequently, representatives of PYADA participated in a conference for ethnic minorities sponsored by NIDA through its Center for Multicultural Awareness. The mothers shared information about PYADA and the growing parent movement and encouraged other ethnics to join the movement and the NFP board.

By April, as part of its effort to reach greater numbers of families, PYADA decided to organize a week devoted to drug and alcohol abuse prevention. They hoped to raise the awareness of the total community and to serve as a catalyst for further prevention activities throughout the District of Columbia. Knowing that Mayor Marion Barry was concerned about drug-related crime in the District, the mothers decided to approach him directly for support. "At first, we couldn't get past the staff," laughs one mother, "because we were real un-

knowns." But, determined not to be ignored, they made many calls and hand-delivered their information to the mayor and other council members. "Once he really talked to us," notes Vonneva Pettigrew, "the mayor was totally supportive." Finally, the mayor issued a proclamation at a special ceremony at the Labor Department, making the week of June 1-7, 1981 Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Week throughout the District. PYADA representatives received the proclamation at the city council chambers, where the full council praised the group for its efforts in the community.

To plan and fund the week of activities, PYADA sought support from private businesses and public agencies. Drug Fair, Inc., a private drug-store chain, offered to sponsor public service announcements, to donate its excellent brochures on parent networking and drug information, and to help fund awareness seminars for parents and students. McDonald's restaurants and Safeway grocery stores donated food and soft drinks. Inspired by the growing community spirit, other local businesses donated supplies and funds to the project. Delores Wright and staff members of the District of Columbia drug abuse agency, the Center for Multicultural Awareness, and the Volunteer Coalition for Alcohol Awareness helped to arrange facilities at the U.S. Department of Labor and Howard University for the many programs. Local junior and senior high schools were contacted and asked to support the effort by selecting students to attend a reception and a 2-day conference. Parents were also encouraged to come. At the conference workshops were presented on alcohol and drug effects, law enforcement, drug paraphernalia, and alternative programs for youth. Many churches in the District emphasized the seriousness of the drug threat to the physical and moral well being of local children.

When the big week was over, the exhausted PYADA mothers slowed down long enough to look back over their accomplishments in just 1 year. In many ways they had surprised themselves--and their children--with the expanding scope of their ambitions. "I guess we just got tired of hearing that we couldn't do anything," says one mother. "That's why we chose the theme 'There's No Excuse for Drug Abuse' for the parent and youth conference." Indeed, PYADA parents do not accept the rationalizations of many sociologists that poverty, unemployment, and lack of educational opportunities mean that inner-city children will inevitably end up involved in drugs and criminal activities. "Who says we can't raise our children to be decent human beings?" challenges one mother. PYADA firmly believes that black families can help themselves, as they have done traditionally, and that they can rebuild a sense of community

involvement by starting with small family and neighborhood groups. "I guess the best thing that's come out of all the publicity that PYADA is getting," observes Vonneva Pettigrew, "is that we're just ordinary parents and kids who are taking a real visible stand against letting our families and streets fall apart."

But the most rewarding development for the parents has been the impact on their own children and their friends. Odesscia Galmore, one of PYADA's active youth, feels that her mother's involvement in PYADA has helped her. A talented singer, Odesscia has big hopes for the future, but because she didn't "party" and "hang out" she felt like an outcast at high school. "I'll admit I was getting real curious about drugs, what with so many kids using them and me getting a lot of static for being so straight," she says. "When my mother joined PYADA she brought home information and we really talked about the scene. It made us closer." Now Odesscia talks to her friends about what she's learning and asks them, "Why don't you try going 1 week without drugs?" She reports proudly that many of her friends have "turned drug-free." "I've even gotten popular," she smiles, "and the kids respect me for being straight." Odesscia and her friends planned to perform in a local musical, "Tripping Out" (later they also performed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts). "You have to work so hard, you just can't use drugs," she says.

Audrey Jones and her 15-year-old daughter Andrea relocated to the suburbs from Washington in late 1981. But they found the drug problem just as bad there. "After all I'd learned with PYADA," notes Mrs. Jones. "I knew what we had to do--organize the parents. But I wasn't ready to rehabilitate the suburbs!" She and her daughter hoped to move back to their old neighborhood and, in the meantime, they continued to do volunteer work for PYADA on the weekends. Andrea, whose singing talents were honed in Talent, Inc., so impressed her suburban teachers that they recommended her for a special music scholarship. She, in turn, recommended that the suburban parents start an antidrug project of their own. When Andrea comes back to the District to visit her old friends, she heads right back into the trenches of the battle against drugs. As she recalls, "My girl friends and I were on the way to the skating rink, when one suddenly said, 'Hey, I've got some Lovely. If we smoke some Lovely, maybe we can meet some dudes.'" Andrea was shocked because she knew that Lovely was marijuana mixed with PCP, and she knew how dangerous it was. She talked her other friends out of using it and they went on to the skating rink. "The girl that smoked it is in the hospital now," Andrea says sadly. "She's completely out of her head."

For Keith Pettigrew, PYADA is helping a lot of dreams to come true. He has watched his mother and his father learn to work together to be strong, supportive parents, even though they're divorced. He has also watched his mother, always a loving parent and concerned community member, become a national spokeswoman for the parent movement for drug-free youth. In May 1981 Mrs. Pettigrew led workshops for the National Head Start Conference in California. Speaking to rooms overflowing with hundreds of concerned Head Start parents from across the country, she delivered her powerful message--"There's no excuse for drug abuse," and "Parents together are not helpless." Since that time she has conducted workshops and meetings for many local and regional Head Start programs.

Recognizing that PYADA's methods of getting active youth participation in prevention work was something from which other parent groups could learn, Mrs. Pettigrew asked if her son Keith could join her when she was invited to Mississippi for the statewide DREAM conference in February 1982.* She felt that Keith and his young friends had a message of hope and idealism that many teenagers were hungry for. When Keith recounted the activities of Talent, Inc. and PYADA to the Deep South audience, he concluded with the reading of a poem he had written for his new play, "Which Road Do I Take?":

In a world full of turmoil and strife
We all cherish one thing and that's life
We all try to do our best
But some of us fail to pass the test
Seeking refuge from daily responsibilities
We make drugs our daily necessities
Tell me, which road do I take?
Which road do I go?

Do I follow my friends, who are
sometimes naive?
Do I listen to the stranger, who I
May or may not believe?
Do I heed the admonition of my family,
Who I know will try to lead me
In the right direction, or do I go
Against them, because I know in them
I have eternal affection?

*Sponsored by the Drug Research and Education Association in Mississippi, a statewide drug abuse prevention association.

The decision is mine, and mine
to make.
Which road do I go, which road do I take?[2]

Keith has learned from his parents and from PYADA to aim high. He hopes his antidrug play will be performed someday in Ford's Theater in the Nation's capital. After entering college in fall 1982 to study communications, he is determined to become an entertainer who can show kids that the drug-free road can indeed make you "somebody special."

It may be just 15 minutes from the White House to the stress-filled inner-city neighborhoods of Washington, D.C., but for years many of the weary, struggling families thought the distance was unbridgeable. Thus, Vonneva and Keith Pettigrew were thrilled when each was asked to join First Lady Nancy Reagan at two national conferences on youthful drug abuse. At the White House Briefing on Drugs and the Family, sponsored by ACTION (the National Volunteer Agency) in March 1982, a nervous but eloquent Mrs. Pettigrew sent a resounding message to the assembled leaders of corporate and civic America. "Parent power works--whether you're rich or poor--and that power will strengthen your children to become the major agents of change in regaining drug-free communities."

Two weeks later, at the National Parent Conference on Drugs and Youth, hosted by PRIDE in Atlanta, Keith Pettigrew sat on a panel with teenagers from California and Georgia as they joined Mrs. Reagan and TV star Melissa Gilbert in a dialog with 500 students aged 9 to 18. Keith described the social scene in his D.C. neighborhood and the way parents and youth have joined together to build self-respect and high expectations for local families. He discussed with Melissa Gilbert the positive influence that wholesome shows like "Little House on the Prairie" can have on young people. Then he talked about his own dream of getting famous entertainers to play a more constructive role in youngsters' lives. For Keith, the painful memory of his good friend's drug-related problems is a constant reminder that too many children are still influenced by careless, cool, drug-using "super dudes" to take a chemical road to nowhere.

Despite the excitement of national conferences and White House appearances, the Pettigrews and their friends in PYADA still faced daily challenges in their communities. When the City Council recently introduced a bill to license head shops in the District of Columbia, the group took immediate action to have

the bill amended to conform to the Federal model law on drug paraphernalia, which would ban the sales completely. Determined that the District of Columbia should not encourage the proliferation of head shops, the PYADA parents contacted the PTA and other civic, religious, and child care organizations to form a coalition. At meetings of parents and civic groups, PYADA members demonstrated the types of drug paraphernalia that are sold in head shops, and they wrote letters and sent petitions to the council. With the help of Maryland parent groups who had addressed the issue in their own State, the Federal model bill was passed. The parents' success in the Nation's capital dealt a major blow to the commercialized drug culture.

Vonneva Pettigrew often feels pulled in a hundred directions, and she sometimes wonders if she's gotten so active that she's neglecting the important quiet times at home with her children. "I was just about ready to quit," she recalls. "Who was I to be trying to fight something as big as the drug world?"

Then her youngest son, DeVon, asked for help on his fifth-grade project. "What now?" thought his frazzled mother. De Von told her that his teacher had assigned them to pick out somebody they admired who served the community in an important way--like a policeman, doctor, or councilmember--and to interview that person. Shyly, DeVon said, "I want to interview you, Mom, because I admire you most for your drug abuse work." Touched, Mrs. Pettigrew sat down with her 11-year-old son. DeVon began to fire off questions in his best TV-journalist fashion. Finally he asked, "And how long do you intend to keep working on the drug problem?"

A tired and tearful mother answered happily, "As long as kids like you really need a chance."

NOTES

1. For more information contact PYADA, 1722 A St. SE, Washington, DC 20003, 202/397-3800.

2. Poem by Keith Lamont Pettigrew. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved 1982.

CHAPTER EIGHT
A STATEWIDE "WAR ON DRUGS" PROJECT

In 1978 Governor Bill Clements recognized that the drug problem in Texas was causing increasing concern among his constituents. Everywhere he spoke parents in the audience asked what could be done about increased drug trafficking. Letters full of pain and fear streamed in to his office, filled with descriptions of the young victims of the drug dealers. Governor Clements realized that an effective antidrug effort would require the committed leadership of someone as interested in children as in legislation. But, mainly, the leaders would have to be creative enough in planning and magnetic enough in personality to rally the bipartisan support of the majority of citizens in his enormous State.

Surprising many political observers, in February 1979 the Governor asked Dallas computer magnate H. Ross Perot to head a "Texans' War on Drugs" project. Perot was the devoted father of five children and the innovative builder of a major data processing firm, Electronic Data Systems Corporation. Clements hoped that his "action-oriented entrepreneurship" would lead to an aggressive and pragmatic program. But Perot hedged at first on his response because he knew the position would require a major investigation and commitment to make any impact. As Perot later told a national parent conference:

> "Bill," I said, "Let me think about it and I'll get back to you, because I know so little about this subject that I'm not sure I'm the right man."
>
> Shortly after that (when I was out of the country) Tom Marquez, my business partner, called me long distance and said, "You're on the front page of the paper today." Tom let me suffer for awhile before he explained that the Governor had announced that I was going to be chairman of the drug committee. After I got back, I called the Governor and said, "Bill, I told you I was just thinking about it." But he said, "Well, I was making a speech and got carried away." That's how I happen to be here. (1)

When Governor Clements announced the appointment of Perot as chairman of the statewide commission, a Fort Worth news editor said that Perot would undoubtedly be the Governor's worst appointment because nobody knew less about the subject he was appointed to work on than Perot did about drugs.

Perot observes that the most important point when any citizens take on a major public service project is that they start from scratch in educating themselves.

> The worst thing about having a lot of experience in any area of expertise is that you develop a standard cookbook in your head. Once you know what to do, you tend to do the same thing every time. That can become a very limiting factor, especially when you're confronting a new, complex, and seemingly intransigent problem like the drug epidemic. (2)

In seeking out members for the Texans' War on Drugs Committee, Perot looked for people who were fast learners and who knew how to exercise power--"I wanted movers and shakers; we didn't need any dead wood or people who would wash out when the going got tough." He decided to draw from the private sector because "we wanted to go out on a limb and try something new." Much to his surprise, when he approached the prominent business and civic leaders of Texas and outlined the enormous challenge, everyone he asked to serve accepted enthusiastically.

Beginning in February 1979, the 18-member committee spent a year and a half investigating the extent of the drug problem in Texas, possible law enforcement and legislative strategies, and effective prevention projects in other parts of the country. Three subcommittees--on education, law enforcement, and legislation--worked to develop a comprehensive statewide plan. Members concerned about law enforcement visited police stations, jails, customs houses, psychiatric wards, and head shops, where they interviewed convicts, smugglers, addicts, and merchants, as well as narcotics officers. "The (committee members) wanted to understand the drug scene from all points of view--the user's, the dealer's, the cop's, the bong-seller's," recounts Perot. "Now, these (business people) were the kind who flew around in their own airplanes to board meetings, so they found themselves in some pretty bizarre situations," he laughs, "But they were good learners and that's what we needed."

To understand the problems of law enforcement and effective drug laws, the committee invited leading officials from government and the military to present their points of view. Peter

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Bensinger, then head of the Drug Enforcement Administration, outlined the complicated relations between international drug control laws (such as the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotics) and Federal ordinances. He made clear the critical interrelatedness of efforts at supply control, which involved many foreign governments, and the improved efforts in the U.S. at reducing consumer demand. Two Coast Guard Admirals described the vulnerability of the nation's borders to sea and air smuggling. Committee members were shocked to learn that 50 flights a day brought illegal drugs across the south Texas border, and two out of three kilos of heroin entering the U.S. came through Texas. "If we can't defend our borders from a drug invasion," remarked one War on Drugs leader, "Why should we assume we can defend them from a military invasion?"

With the national and international legal situation now mapped out, the committee wanted to examine the effectiveness of Texas drug laws and to design a strong package of laws to deter drug trafficking and supplies to minors more effectively. To head the legislative project, Perot stumbled into a leader in his own "corporate back yard." As Richard Salwen, who became legislative counsel to the project, recounts, he was just "an average dumb parent" when he first heard Perot speak about the drug epidemic in Texas.

> At that time I was a bewildered parent of an 11-year-old and a 9-year-old. I didn't know anything about drugs, but I was very concerned because I knew my kids were getting to an age where I was going to have to start worrying about it. The material that Perot presented in his speech had me sitting there slack-jawed for about an hour. I was astonished. When he finished I approached him and said, "I didn't know any of this existed. It's horrible and incredible. What can I do to help?" Well, you know what happens to a volunteer. He got a little slow smile on his face, and he said, "I'll think of something." (3)

Two weeks later Perot walked into Salwen's office and said, "I've heard that Texas is the biggest safe haven for drug smugglers and large distributors in the country. I want to know why and I want to know what we can do to improve it." Startled, Salwen said, "Yes, sir!" But he was basically a corporate lawyer and knew little about criminal law. "I knew I wasn't an expert," Salwen recalls, "and so I immediately got on the phone and started to gather experts." With the help of Dr. Abner McCall, President of Baylor University, Salwen collected a team of law professors and students at the university's law school to analyze

Texas' drug laws and newly revised drug laws in other States, such as Florida, and then to develop a comprehensive legislative package for Texas.

When Ross Perot publicly announced the new legislative thrust, he remarked to reporters that Austin, the State capital, was a major center for illegal drugs. By examining where archaic laws, loopholes in the law, or failure to enforce the law contributed to the burgeoning consumer market, the committee hoped to develop tighter controls over the criminal supply network. Perot described narcotics entrepreneurs as "lazy itinerants" who carry their trade to areas of least resistance from law enforcement. "As you start to squeeze these people across the State," he noted, "they will move into areas with a history of weak action by police, prosecutors, and judges." Thus, the committee planned to circulate "score cards" listing drug convictions in each county, with the goal of bringing public wrath down on officials in counties with weak records. "It's kind of like looking at a win-loss record on a football team," said Perot. "You don't have to ask which is the weakest team."

Meanwhile, the education committee brought in national policy makers and scientific experts to teach them the biological facts about drugs and to explore different prevention strategies. Robert DuPont, now president of the American Council on Drug Education, had a tremendous impact on the group. His historical overview of the rise in marijuana use among teenagers from two percent in 1962 to 60 percent in 1979, and his revelation that young people between the ages of 18 and 25 are the only age group in the country with a rising death rate (up 15 percent over 10 years), helped the committee understand the epidemic seriousness of the drug problem. He advised them to focus strongly on marijuana education, because that drug was the gateway into illegal drug use--"If young people do not smoke pot, they simply do not use any other illegal drug; to reject marijuana is to reject the whole drug culture." DuPont further advised the committee to draw on the scientific expertise of Dr. Carlton Turner and other researchers to develop a credible antidrug, prohealth educational message. When members asked how best to get that message across to youngsters, DuPont answered, "Through their parents. The informed parent groups are doing the most effective drug education work in the country. They are our best hope of winning the war on drugs." DuPont then urged Perot and committee members to visit Atlanta and Naples to see at first hand the work of the early parent groups.

Subsequently Perot and staff members spent a day with Buddy Gleaton and volunteers at the PRIDE office, with Unified

Parents members from Northside High School, and with Sue Rusche and Families in Action representatives. He visited Naples and was appalled by the sheer quantity of drugs entering south Florida, but he was also excited by the pragmatic, persistent, and effective work done by Naples Informed Parents in the face of the chemical floodtide. As he told Bill and Pat Barton, "You parent groups are where the tread hits the road." In April Perot brought Marsha Manatt back from a sabbatical year in Greece to discuss the background of the parent movement, the obstacles parents might face, and the prevention strategies outlined in Parents, Peers, and Pot.

By summer 1980 Perot knew where the ground troops were for the Texans' War on Drugs--they were the mothers of Texas. When he reported his plans to the Governor, Clements was delighted. At a news conference Perot announced that the State project would be built on the premise that "a group of aroused mothers is an awesome force." Quipped Clements, "Just one aroused mother is an awesome force."[4]

To initiate the practical work of the project, the Governor opened a central office in Austin called DARE (Drug Abuse Research and Education Foundation). To head this "action arm" of the statewide committee Perot turned to a man who is a folk hero to many people in Texas--retired Brigadier General Robinson Risner.

Perot was impressed by Risner's courage and commitment to young people, qualities Risner had learned about during 7½ years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam (from 1965 to 1973). The father of five sons, Risner clung to memories of his family and hopes for their future as he endured years of torture, solitary confinement, and attempts at brainwashing. According to Perot, the shocking conditions of the prison camps, in violation of all standards of international law, led the Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, to ask Perot to mobilize a massive public outcry against the treatment of American P.O.W.s. The success of the campaign in arousing world opinion persuaded the North Vietnamese to improve the plight of the prisoners.

When General Risner was finally released, he was deeply grateful to Perot and the volunteers from EDS who helped the POWs. Back home in Texas, though, Risner was to learn that many turbulent changes had taken place in the beliefs of the Vietnam generation.

In 1980 he observed sadly, "I came back to an America that was totally changed--to a society where drugs were available in

every schoolyard and where youngsters with all the world before them were 'wasted' in every sense of the word." Thus, when Ross Perot asked him to come out of retirement to head the DARE project, Risner accepted with a sense of honor and enthusiasm.

From February to September 1980 the War on Drugs committee developed the printed and filmed resources they would make available to the parents of Texas. Media experts from EDS filmed talks by scientists, physicians, parents, and teachers all over the country. An EDS team was sent to the international symposium entitled "Drug Abuse and the Modern World: A Perspective for the Eighties," organized by Dr. Gabriel Nahas at the medical school of Columbia University.[5] They filmed speakers who seemed potentially interesting for their Texas audiences. After examining hundreds of educational pamphlets, the committee decided to start out with three basic booklets--Rusche's How to Form a Families in Action Group in Your Community, CICOM's How to Help Your Child Resist the Marijuana Culture, and Manatt's Parents, Peers, and Pot. The committee also produced a basic fact sheet and sample speeches to help volunteer speakers develop knowledgeable and interesting talks on the drug situation in Texas.

With the printed and filmed materials ready for mass duplication and distribution, the War on Drugs committee had to decide which statewide organizations could most effectively implement the parent education project. The major criteria would be the capacity for maintaining credibility in the local community and the ability to mobilize volunteers. When Perot announced in the summer of 1980 that the leaders of the War on Drugs project would be the Junior League and the Medical Wives Auxiliary, critics in the media roared with laughter. "A bunch of society women? He's got to be kidding," scoffed a reporter. "They wouldn't know a joint if they saw one." But Perot knew exactly what he was doing when he chose two respected and influential women's organizations. In his usual wry fashion, he explained his choices:

> Now, let's assume we had gotten a hundred-million-dollar Federal grant, and we were going to go out and hire hundreds of talented women to do this. So we said, "Let's just go hire the doctor's wives." But you can't hire the typical doctor's wife. "Well, let's go hire the Junior League, then." Some of them might be hirable, but as a general rule, at this level you can't. Just think of the talent that's in the Junior League. Just think of the dollars in education that have been spent on these women. Think of the

> leadership roles that they play in their communities... Now, many of the little towns don't have Junior Leagues, but the doctor's wife is right at the heart of the power structure. (6)

In September 1980 Perot and his committee invited the State officers and all local presidents of the two women's organizations to Dallas for intensive 2-day seminars on the adolescent drug problem. At the seminars Carlton Turner described the latest research findings on marijuana. Robert DuPont talked about the epidemic among young people and the stepping-stone process of polydrug abuse. DEA agents described the criminal trafficking networks. An ex-smuggler and abuser recounted vividly the deterioration of health, intellect, and family relationships that come with involvement in the drug culture. A PRIDE parent from Atlanta pointed out the cultural factors that influence youngsters to experiment with drugs and then detailed the practical steps of building parent peer groups. Sarah Swindell, a mother from Celeste, Texas, told how she and other parents had already organized a families-in-action group to reclaim their small town from the "dopers." At the Medical Wives seminar one mother in the audience stood up and recounted, in a quaking voice, the day the police called to tell her that her 15-year-old daughter had been found unconscious from a beer-and-Quaalude overdose on a Galveston beach.

By the end of the intensive day of seminars the 200 women were ready to meet the stirring call to action issued by their host, Ross Perot:

> When our EDS employees were taken hostage in Iran, I asked for help from the young men in my company. I hoped a few might agree to join our rescue effort, but I realized that they had wives and children and many responsibilities. Most of them didn't even know the employees who had been kidnapped many thousands of miles across the ocean. I was deeply moved when every young man I spoke to volunteered, without hesitation, to risk his life in a dangerous secret mission to Iran.
>
> You ladies may think we're asking a lot of you when we invite you to join our Texans' War on Drugs Project. But I have great faith in your potential leadership and commitment, for we are asking you to rescue the children of Texas--your children and grandchildren--from a cruel and avaricious drug

> culture. I firmly believe that no one but you parents--loving mothers and fathers--can effectively do the job. (7)

The intellectual stimulation and emotional intensity of the seminars galvanized the Junior Leaguers and Medical Wives into a sense of urgency and commitment. Perot had asked them to organize a big drug awareness rally in each of their communities within the next few months. He challenged them to have a first-stage success story ready to report to DARE by December 1980. Laughing about it later, Perot recalls:

> Realistically, we expected a very high dropout rate. We thought if one person out of ten whom we trained at the seminars ever did anything, we would be lucky. You know, most volunteers are like morning glories; they wilt by noon. But it's just incredible what these women have done. They took care of everything in sight. (8)

In order to support and monitor the local community organizations, the Austin office of DARE planned to hire six regional coordinators and open offices in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, San Angelo, Odessa, and Amarillo. To initiate the project while the hiring process was going on, Perot released six female employees from EDS to work with the community volunteers. These bright and efficient women travelled night and day all over the State, helping with the complicated logistics of visiting speakers, supplies of literature and films, and securing facilities. As one EDS worker recalls, "Sometimes it was like old-time barnstorming, flying 'crop duster' shuttles to the far-flung towns of Texas. But we didn't want the local volunteers to get swamped by the complex demands of the statewide project. They needed full time and energy to get their own organizations off the ground. After that first 10 months, we EDS employees could back off and leave it to the parents and neighborhoods."

Within months the numbers of parent groups were expanding so rapidly that the supply of literature could not keep up with the demand. Thus, the War on Drugs committee decided to reach millions of readers through newspaper supplements. The committee produced a Sunday supplement for the Dallas Morning News that included Harold Voth's article "How to Get Yor Child Off Marijuana," medical information, prevention strategies, and legislative information. For a cost of $25,000, the supplement, which was in detachable booklet form, reached more than

700,000 homes in the Dallas area. A master copy was then made available to the community groups, who urged their own local newspapers to run it. Occasionally the Junior Leaguers and Medical Wives were shocked to have the supplement rejected with derisive scorn by journalists with pro-marijuana attitudes. Perot recalls with amusement:

> In one major city in Texas nobody at the paper wanted to run the drug supplement. Well, the ladies went down to the fellow who owned the paper and shamed him into paying for it personally out of his own pocket. We still get funny stories out of the press room and all of that, but he is squarely behind the program and is a vocal booster and financial supporter. (9)

With the new information and calls to action reaching millions of parents, and with many families-in-action coalitions being formed, the War on Drugs project was ready for the next stage--the development of small parent peer groups and trained parent leadership in every classroom in Texas. The committee asked the state PTA to join the project and was delighted when the 1,200 delegates to the PTA Congress voted overwhelmingly to cosponsor it. Grateful for the commitment of more than 750,000 members to support the forthcoming legislative effort and to help organize parent groups, Perot agreed to appear with regional PTA officers around the State to drum up more media attention and support for the PTA effort.

While the three volunteer groups were organizing awareness meetings all over the State, the War on Drugs legislative subcommittee had drafted a comprehensive package of antidrug laws to present to the spring 1981 session of the Texas legislature. EDS lawyer Richard Salwen joined the "crop duster" shuttles to speak at nearly every community rally about the purpose of each proposed law in the campaign for drug-free youth. Among other things, the package included the outlawing of drug paraphernalia sales, stiffer sentences for drug trafficking (especially to minors), triplicate prescription requirements for controlled substances, and professional license revocation for "pill-pushing" doctors. As Perot observed, "We want to make Texas an absolutely awful place in which to be a major drug dealer and even worse place to be an adult caught selling one marijuana joint or one pill to a teenager."

At each community awareness rally EDS employees and War on Drugs Committee Members urged the parents to lend their bipartisan support to the legislation, which was designed for the

protection of all children. In a State with as turbulent a political history as Texas, this attempt to build a multiparty coalition to lobby the legislature was almost unprecedented. Cynical political observers predicted that the whole "naive do-gooder" effort would fail and that the proposed laws would be shredded by opposition lawyers. But at each rally the parents were given a list of their political representatives and were urged by the PTA, the Junior League, and the Medical Auxiliary--three respected groups made up of members of many different political and religious beliefs--to call and write their local legislators about their concerns. To send their message even more forcefully to the politicians, the parents were urged to come to the capital to present their petitions to their lawmakers. All over the State aroused citizens offered school buses, vans, and even private airplanes to help the lobbying effort.

When Perot was criticized for using his own employees to build unprecedented constituency pressure, he laughed and replied, "I wouldn't call it political pressure; I'd call it 'mother pressure.'" Besides, he said, "I'll use anybody who will do a good job, and my employees are doing just that. If we start worrying about all the criticism we get, we'll rationalize ourselves right back into neutral." In February 1981 Perot enlisted even more "political mothers" when he hosted a drug education seminar for all the spouses and aides of Texas legislators.

With the lobbying effort in full swing in the capital, the student newspaper at the University of Texas in Austin ran a funny, biting satire on the War on Drugs educational material, but the DARE office took it with good humor.[10] "At least the point that there is new research information on marijuana finally made it into the university paper and a dialogue has been started," noted one staffer. The initial opposition from many students, libertarians, and drug professionals also reconfirmed how important it was to the project to use the best-informed scientists and psychiatrists for their research materials. By June 1981, despite a vigorous fight put up by the headshop owners and sophisticated attorneys, the Texans' War on Drugs legislative package passed with more grassroots bipartisan support than any comparable legislation in the State's history. Governor Clements called this the "crown on the head" of an exciting legislative year.*

*In 1983, new Governor Mark White asked Perot to continue his leadership of the bipartisan War on Drugs Project.

Once the new laws had been passed, Perot's employees went back to their regular jobs. Many of them continue to work as volunteers in their communities, civic groups, or PTAs.

Any further expansion of the parent education work will be carried out by the PTAs and community coalitions. A special training manual was developed by the PTA and the War on Drugs committee clearly outlining the steps involved in training speakers, organizing community meetings, developing parent networks, and working with the schools.[11] The manual includes examples of the methods that various towns have used to develop surveys of drug use and attitudes toward drugs, guidelines for parents and young people, and discussion topics for parent peer groups that range far beyond drugs. The aim of the PTA project is to have a trained drug education parent for every classroom in the public schools of Texas. That parent will then initiate the formation of small parent peer groups and neighborhood networks.

Perot and his committee believe that this grassroots level of parent cooperation will be the real test of whether the ambitious statewide project will actually work. He observes that "We don't want to raise a lot of dust with our dramatic War on Drugs and then come back 3 years later to find out that the kids are still getting high behind the drive-in." Thus, in the PTA-DARE manual many different suggestions, warnings, and options are spelled out.[12]

The third part of the long-range project is the direct involvement of young people. The PTA manual includes materials from the "Parents Who Care" organization in California, which tells how to organize drug-free parties and entertainment. Drawing upon the suggestions of California high school students, DARE youth coordinators are initiating "Students Who Care" groups in many high schools. Juniors and seniors who have chosen to stay "straight" talk to fifth- and sixth-graders about the problems of adolescence and the importance of staying drug-free. A manual on peer counseling was distributed to student coordinators in spring 1982.

Recognizing that teenage unemployment, especially in the summer, is a contributing factor to drug abuse, DARE also enlisted the cooperation of various civic and business clubs around the State to assist community job projects. The Lions Club officially joined the War on Drugs project in September 1981, pledging practical and financial support to building

community coalitions.* The youth organizations of the Lions Clubs, the Leo Clubs, will also be integrated into the prevention project. Many of the families-in-action organizations, with support from the Lions Clubs, Exchange Clubs, and others, will promote a "Teen Job Corps" that will provide volunteer and paid jobs for teenagers during the summer. DARE also joined forces with Channel One, a drug abuse prevention program emphasizing youth participation in community improvement projects, which is supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.[13] In Channel One, local business firms help teenagers design and implement a public service project in which they will gain valuable vocational skills and make a contribution to their own neighborhoods.

In order to reach out to more minority parents and children, DARE hired Ricardo Loera as full-time Minorities Coordinator. Loera encourages the State's many ethnic groups to join the parent movement and to tailor their information and prevention strategies to their different cultural needs. He is working to get Spanish translations of Parents, Peers, and Pot and the award-winning TV documentaries Epidemic I: Kids, Drugs, and Alcohol and Epidemic II: America Fights Back.[14]

In Houston the steady increase of minority involvement in the "Houston Informed Parents" project is proving that the basic principle of the parent movement--the parents' instinct to protect their young--is definitely cross-cultural. According to Pilar Garcia, founder of "Parents and Neighbors United," parents who get informed about the drug threat to their children are willing to take on any challenge. Heartbroken by the epidemic of inhalant abuse in her Hispanic community, which affected her own son and neighborhood kids as young as 5, Mrs. Garcia organized parents to boycott the companies that irresponsibly marketed paints and solvents containing toluene. As a result, many stores stopped selling to minors those paints and glues which are commonly abused by "sniffers." As the parent boycott grew in more Texas cities, one major corporation recalled its paint products and added chemicals that neutralized the intoxicants. With her own son now drug-free and proud of his feisty mother, Mrs. Garcia has volunteered to help other Houston parents mobilize to reclaim their neighborhoods from the drug pushers.[15]

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*In 1983, Texan Everett Grinstead, President of Lions International, announced a commitment of 1.5 million members in 157 countries to a five-year project in drug awareness. For more information about this project, write International Activities and Program Development, Lions Clubs International, 300 22nd St., Oakbrook, IL 60570.

Ricardo Loera is especially proud of the antidrug work that is under way among migrant parents and disadvantaged youth. Spanish-speaking rallies sponsored by the Migrant Parent Advisory Councils are drawing big turnouts, and parent peer groups are being formed around elementary schools that serve the seasonal farm workers' children. In San Marcos, a "Students Against Drugs" youth group has been formed among Job Corps members. The Corps is composed mainly of school dropouts and underprivileged teens, and the SAD youngsters are working to raise ambitions for a more productive drug-free future among the organization's members.

The ambitious scope and logistical magnitude of the Texans' War on Drugs project has generated interest all over the country--with feature articles ridiculing or praising it in "skin" magazines and serious journals. In March 1982 the White House and ACTION sponsored a national seminar on "Drug Use and the Family," in which Ross Perot spoke to approximately 20 chief executive officers of the Nation's leading corporations about the important role that the business community can play in supporting the parent movement for drug-free youth. Then, with First Lady Nancy Reagan as hostess, the President's senior advisor on drugs, Dr. Carlton Turner, used plain English and a storyteller's gift to explain the Administration's serious concern about the impact of drugs on America's young people. To the assembled heads of the National PTA, Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, the Rabbinical Council, the Federation of Women's Clubs, and many others, ACTION director Tom Pauken explained how the Federal Government and private business could help the volunteer projects and parent networking.

But in the splendid rooms of the White House it was the ordinary people themselves--from Texas, Florida, Washington, California, and other states--who brought the message home to the Nation's business and civic leaders about the simplicity, practicality, and effectiveness of the parent movement against drugs. Their accounts of how they started from scratch, learned on their feet, and turned around the drug situation in their own back yards, neighborhoods, and schools reinforced the accuracy of Ross Perot's early perception that "There is no stronger force than the parental instinct in the fight for drug-free youth. It's just like a mama bear protecting her cub."

When Perot looks back on the hard work of the past 3 years, he starts to smile. "You know, our parents knew the answer all along. We're just reinventing the wheel. When I was a teenager growing up in East Texas, my mother had it all figured out. With us kids, she insisted that every night when we came in--no

matter how late the hour--we had to kiss her goodnight. It took me 20 years to realize just how many vices that check-up kiss kept me from trying out."

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NOTES

1. Perot, R. "The Texans' War on Drugs Project." In: National Parents' Movement for Drug Free Youth: PRIDE Southeast Drug Conference Proceedings: 1980-1981. Georgia State University, p. 172. Perot's statements are also drawn from interviews and taped speeches.

2. Ibid., p. 172.

3. Salwen, R. "Texans' War on Drugs Legislative Package." In: National Parents' Movement for Drug Free Youth: PRIDE Proceedings, p. 165.

4. Montgomery, D. Clements, Perot mount drug fight. Dallas Times Herald, October 26, 1979.

5. Nahas, G. and Frick, H. (eds.). Drug Abuse in the Modern World: A Perspective for the Eighties. New York: Pergamon Press, 1981.

6. Perot, R. "The Texans' War on Drugs Project." PRIDE Proceedings, p. 176.

7. Perot, R. Speech at Drug Education Seminar, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Dallas, TX, Sept. 25, 1980.

8. Perot, R. "The Texans' War on Drugs Project." PRIDE Proceedings, p. 177.

9. Ibid., pp. 177-78.

10. Perspectives: Marijuana. The Daily Texan, December 9, 1980.

11. Drug Education Training Manual and Resource Guide. Texans' War on Drugs, DARE, and Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers (1981). For information write DARE, 7800 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 381-W, Austin, TX 78757.

12. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

13. For information on Channel One, write National Clearinghouse on Drug Abuse Information, P.O. Box 416, Kensington, MD 20795.

14. For information on television and film versions of Epidemic, contact PRIDE, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303.

15. For information contact Houston Informed Parents, 311 Richmond St., Suite 350, Houston, TX 77098. Also: Parents and Neighbors United, 706 No. Super, Houston, TX 77011.

CHAPTER NINE
CALIFORNIA: PARENTS AND TEENS WHO CARE

In June 1978 when parents in the San Francisco Bay area read a front-page news story entitled "Senior Prom--Night of Glamor," many of them wondered if California had indeed become an "altered state."[1] The article described teenagers lining up cases of champagne, grams of cocaine, and bottles of pills in preparation for the big night, and the implication was that all this sophistication was a definite improvement over the days when "proms were modest affairs limited to the fetid gym or local Elks Hall." Throughout the story the message was that underage drinking, drunk driving, and illicit drug use were the rights of passage for California's liberated youth.

The trendy journalistic attitude was particularly frustrating to those parents of high school students who felt overwhelmed by the intoxication-oriented popular culture. Despite sporadic efforts by concerned parents and prevention workers, California had developed the most powerful and pervasive drug culture in the country. The glamorous image of marijuana, cocaine, and Quaaludes created by many stars and writers in the entertainment industry greatly influenced teenage lifestyles. However, California has always been the Nation's trendsetter and, just as acceptance of drug use reached its peak there during the "Me Decade," a growing countermovement to the drug culture shows signs of becoming one of the Nation's most powerful and effective. Ironically, it is young people themselves who sense that things have gone too far--that the teenage social world is out of control.

In another 1978 news article entitled "The Kids Who Don't: Pot Temptation Is Great," the loneliness of the straight youngster was made poignantly clear:

> Interviews with Vista teenagers who <u>don't</u> use drugs reveal that...they are constantly tempted. Some have said that because they are in the minority, the temptation to become accepted--and thus to begin drinking or smoking pot--is great....

> They talked about pressures that all kids face--nagging parents, school homework, and jobs. But the pressure to be part of the crowd is the most difficult to overcome....
>
> Many kids told how they come in contact with some aspect of drug use, even though they don't want any part of it. A 16-year-old sophomore said that when she's at a football game, even her close friends offer her a chance to smoke marijuana. "It turns me off," she said, "I don't talk about it. I don't see what the point is in having it." She said her best friend began using drugs until she overdosed. "I knew she was involved, but I just didn't pay any attention...." (2)

The Vista high school students were not happy with their social isolation or their sense of helplessness when they saw friends "go down the drain." But they felt little support from adults or from the law for their own decision to stay drug-free. The dwindling numbers of straight students felt that many schools in California had given up on the problem--there were so many kids getting high that enforcement of school rules, much less local laws, had become almost impossible. In Marin County a local government official asked a teenager, "Is there a drug problem at the school?" The student responded, "No, you can get anything you want."[3]

At the heart of the matter lay the charge, often made by young people, drug professionals, juvenile judges, and educators, that "Parents don't care." But in Palo Alto, Joann Lundgren did not believe that. She knew that parents often felt confused and helpless about the teenage social scene. So did she--but that didn't mean she didn't care. She also sensed that there were other worried parents in Palo Alto. It was just a matter of getting them activated. When she decided to take the first step-to reach out to parents in her own community--Joann Lundgren started a powerful movement in California that was soon to prove there are tens of thousands of "Parents Who Care."

As a former school principal and the mother of four teenagers, Mrs. Lundgren had watched with distress as the drug scene expanded from the college campuses to the grammar schools. Thus, when the PTA of Palo Alto's Gunn High School hosted a meeting of parents to discuss major concerns about their teenagers, Mrs. Lundgren attended with eager anticipation. Disappointed by the low turnout, she was still grateful that at least 17 parents were concerned about the teenage drug and drinking problem. The small group lingered after the meeting

and decided to continue to get together for evening discussions in each other's homes. Some of the parents had children already involved in drugs and drinking, while others were worried about the intense pressures on their children who had so far stayed straight. "Talking together, we learned that by seventh grade the children must decide whether to attend parties where pot and booze are served," recalls Mrs. Lundgren. "It had gotten so normal to get high that the 12-year-olds felt odd if they didn't." The kids were exhorted by their peers, by many adults, and by the laidback, "mellowed-out" entertainment culture to "party their lives away."

In fall 1979 the Palo Alto parents began to hear about other parent groups and contacted Tom Adams, at NIDA's Pyramid Project, for more information. Adams helped to bring together members of his own parent group, Lafayette Unified for Youth, the Palo Alto parents, and other concerned citizens for some planning meetings in private homes. He told them about the projects at Northside High School in Atlanta and at Naples High School in Florida, and he urged them to use sound research and a nonblaming, systematic plan. But, mainly, he urged them to have full confidence that even in trendy California they could make a real difference in their children's social attitudes and behavior. To do that the parents would have to reclaim the teenagers' sense of the "norm" from the drug culture. Thus, the Palo Alto parents, now two dozen strong, got organized. Naming themselves Parents Who Care, they began their project of parent-to-parent education. They were pleased by the full backing of the Gunn High School PTSA, but they knew that the real legwork would have to be done by those individual parents who had a sense of urgency and dogged perseverance.

In March 1980, with their educational materials lined up, 20 parents began telephoning every parent of the 1,800 students at Gunn to invite them to a big drug awareness meeting. Principal Larry Lynch sent followup letters urging all parents to attend. Contrary to the widespread trend of declining attendance at high school PTA functions, more than 400 Palo Alto parents turned out to learn about the "get high" social world of their children. Despite the blatant advertising of drugs on billboards and newsstands, the front-page news stories on cocaine and proms, the booming paraphernalia industry, and the growth of marijuana into California's number one cash crop, the parents of Palo Alto shared the common reaction of parents all over the country. They were stunned to hear of the pervasiveness of drug and alcohol use among their own children, and they were open-mouthed to learn about the "do drugs" messages that their children encountered daily.

The eye-opening meeting generated increasing concern and a commitment to parental action. Smaller followup meetings were scheduled in private homes. Mrs. Lundgren notes that the private meetings soon brought out an important point:

> We had no known agreements among ourselves in relationship to our children's social scene. With no agreements, there is no structure provided for youth. There is nothing for them to hit up against to test limits. They have no security that the adults will not allow certain kinds of behavior.

Thus, the Gunn parents studied Atlanta's Northside High School guidelines and adapted them to their local needs. The objectives of the parent organization and the suggested behavioral guidelines were published in the Gunn PTSA newsletter--and the Parents Who Care movement was officially launched.

Joann Lundgren and the Gunn parents were amazed by how fast the movement spread in northern California. Neighboring communities heard about the Palo Alto project and called to find out how to organize local groups. Ann Landers praised the movement in her column.[4] Within 8 months there were 182 chapters of Parents Who Care representing 124 school districts in the San Francisco Bay and Peninsula region. At Campbell High School, in Westmont, teacher Will Finck was delighted by the parent activism. "The Parents Who Care movement is like Mount St. Helens," he noted. "When the time was right, it erupted."[5] Two years earlier, Finck pointed out, the time had not been right.

Finck and many others who had been frustrated by parental apathy in the past give credit for the rapid expansion of the movement to the nonblaming, constructive approach of Parents Who Care. "First of all," observes one leader, "we believe that parents must accept the full responsibility for their children's behavior. But we don't accuse or blame parents. We seek mutual education and cooperation in dealing with our teenagers' social problems." Next, they advocate strong parental support for the schools. "That expression of trust and confidence in the motives and goals of our educators has made it easier for schools to admit they have a drug problem--and to welcome parental involvement," observes Mrs. Lundgren.

"We didn't come charging in on a crusade to stamp out drugs and alcohol," recalls Linda Bailey, of San Carlos. "Instead, we entered a dialog with the schools and students by asking, 'What can we parents do to improve the social experience of our teenagers?'"

During the first year of Parents Who Care activity, the principal goal was to reach as many parents as possible and to serve notice to the drug culture that parents would no longer be passive about drug abuse. Thus, in May 1980 more than 1,400 parents paid for and signed their names on a full-page newspaper ad in The Peninsula Times Tribune proclaiming that they were parents who cared and inviting community support for drug abuse prevention.

The ad was a vitalizing force for the parent groups, and it served as a rallying point for parents in many other communities, who soon sponsored similar ads. Local police and school officials stated that the ads proved that parents meant business and were ready to support stricter enforcement of the laws and school rules. Moreover, many parents volunteered to help patrol schoolyards and to monitor drug-dealing locations. At Portola Valley Junior High School, a group called Campus Parents was formed.[6] Working with teachers and administrators, the parents patrolled the campus before school and during lunch. "Within a month, the drug problem on campus was virtually eliminated," recalls parent Sharon Niederhaus. "Teachers reported an uplift in student morale, because the kids were no longer under pressure to try drugs." By fall 1981 the superintendents of schools in the Bay Area were so heartened by the positive, pragmatic actions taken by parents that they sponsored a Parents Who Care conference in San Jose for 500 parents and school personnel.

In the meantime, with parent groups forming in hundreds of neighborhoods, more and more teenagers sensed that their parents really were accomplishing something. "When my Mom dressed up like a hippie and went into a head shop to buy bongs for a PTA meeting," laughs one ninth-grader, "I thought she was crazy. I had first smoked some pot in sixth grade, but she didn't have a clue. She and Dad aren't so naive anymore, and they've made it easier for me to stay straight." The amused but amazed recognition that their parents were not helpless, and a grudging but growing sense of respect for their courage, began to generate a new attitude among the chidren of "Parents Who Care." At San Carlos High School, Margery Ranch recalls, "We had hoped from the beginning to involve young people in our effort to change the social norm of drugs and drinking. But the kids' contribution has gone beyond anything we initially dreamed of. Maybe it took the adults to get people's heads out of the sand and to show the kids that we do care enough to work hard at this. But the teenagers are the ones who are going to finish the job. After all, it's their own social world that they're out to change."

The growing movement of "Teens Who Care" began in summer 1980, when the Gunn High School parents invited a group of college students to help plan an alternatives project for younger students. Several of the college students had attended local schools and were familiar with the partying scene. But they had chosen to stay straight, and they presented attractive, outgoing, and successful role models for the teenagers. Working with the parent group, the college students prepared three workshops on "How to Give a Successful Party (Without Drugs or Alcohol)" for groups of 15-20 high school students. The workshops were enthusiastically received by the teenagers, and they agreed to work with Parents Who Care to develop alternative social activities for the coming school year. Representatives from each grade level, 9-12, were invited for discussion evenings.

"That first meeting with 40 seniors was quite an experience," recalls Joann Lundgren. "There was a lot of confusion about what we were up to and some simmering hostility between parents and kids." But the conversation soon became frank and open-minded. When one father asked what the seniors thought were the goals of Parents Who Care, several angrily retorted that the group was "out to spoil our fun" and to mount a "prohibitionist crusade against drugs and alcohol." But the parents explained that they wanted to provide some options to the "get drunk or stoned" party life that seemed to overwhelm so many kids. The parents discussed the social guidelines they had adopted and explained the reasons behind the family-to-family communication network, the chaperoning rules, and the consistent curfews. By the end of a long night, one relieved mother notes, "The seniors were satisfied that we were for them rather than against them."

Most important, once the basic rule of dialog--not preaching or arguing--had been established between parents and students, the teenagers really opened up to the parents at the next sessions. Hesitantly, some of the parents described what they were learning about the teenage drug and drinking scene. They half apologized to the students for their growing distrust about the pervasiveness of teenage lying and their negative reactions to the illegal and hazardous behavior. Then the kids reassured them that the scene was even worse than the parents imagined. With startling candor and much laughter, the teens gave the parents a course in "reality education." "Partying," they said, invariably meant using alcohol and/or drugs (mainly marijuana and cocaine). Most of them had <u>never</u>, during their high school years, been to parties without alcohol or drugs. And drug and alcohol involvement was the only way they knew of socializing.

Significantly, the students also expressed their discontent with their social experience. "Parties are boring," admitted one boy. "You never really get to know anybody. But there's nothing else to do." Another girl said she thought getting high at all the parties was great when she was in the ninth grade--until she realized that nobody even remembered her on Monday morning. Several seniors who had stayed straight said the only alternatives to parties were to go to a movie or stay home--"It's kind of the social pits around here to be straight," complained one. Finally, most of the students said they would like their social life to be different, but they wondered if it was too late by the time they were juniors and seniors.

Recognizing that the new frankness had been a positive experience for parents and students and that the older teenagers yearned to make some positive contribution to their school, the parents asked for help from the seniors in developing alternatives for younger students. Looking back on their own experiences at 13 and 15, the seniors remembered how they had respected the senior class and tried to emulate them. They realized that the junior high school kids and ninth-graders were now looking up to them in the same way. Those seniors with younger brothers and sisters were especially concerned, because they knew that kids in the fifth and sixth grades were getting pot, booze, and pills from older teens and from permissive parents. "When I look back now on how confused and insecure I was in seventh grade" mused one 18-year-old girl, "I shudder to think what could have happened if I'd gotten involved in drugs then. It was hard enough to deal with at 15 when I first started getting high, much less at 12." When the parents asked the seniors if they thought they could make a difference in the younger students' attitudes, they answered that they weren't sure but they wanted to try.

The parents and students began working on a series of drug- and alcohol-free parties to present as options to the usual social scene. The parties were not limited to nonusers, but the rule was that no one should arrive at the party intoxicated or use any substance while there. "That was important in avoiding the image that the straight parties were just for prudes or nerds," notes one student. "At first we were really exploring ways to socialize and enjoy ourselves in a way most teenagers hadn't tried before--sober!"

After the first experiments the parents wrote up some guidelines for "Adults Planning Teenage Dances." The growing success of the parties encouraged the seniors that they were on the right track. Despite initial skepticism from the friends whom they

invited to the alternative "get-togethers," the reaction of most students who attended was "When's the next one?"

After a panel presentation by Parents and Teens Who Care to parents of incoming freshmen, the seniors decided to develop a workshop for younger students on "How to Give A Successful Party Without Drugs or Alcohol." Again, the response was so positive that the seniors' suggestions were written up to meet increasing requests from other classes and schools.* As one student laughed, "A keg party is easy to plan because nobody does anything but get drunk, but an alternatives party takes a lot more preparation and cooperation with friends and parents. You need tons of food, games, music, and organization."

An "alternatives" party often begins with an ice-breaker activity. For example, as each guest comes in the door, the name of a famous person is pinned to his or her back. Each guest then grills the others about "who am I?" to help everyone relax and get to laughing and talking. Theme parties, costume parties, progressive dinners, sports events, water skiing, hayrides, haunted houses, luaus, western nights, and midnight suppers have all been tried by different groups. What the teenagers like most about these social gatherings is the sense that they get to know each other better, both in the pre-party organizing efforts and through conversation and games. "Being stoned really seemed dull after a while," recalls one surprised girl, who had been skeptical about the whole "do-gooder" effort. Many students also felt relieved that they no longer had to deceive their parents about their activities. Despite the "normalization of lying," which went hand-in-glove with the normalization of drug use, most teenagers were uncomfortable with their own dishonesty.

When Joann Lundgren was invited to represent Parents Who Care at the national PRIDE conference in April 1981, she asked if she could bring along a group of Gunn students to explain what they were doing to initiate student involvement. The group also decided to take advantage of the cross-country trip to speak to as many political and community leaders as possible. With financial support from the Hewlett Packard Foundation and private donations, parents and teens from Palo Alto traveled to Washington, D. C., and Atlanta to voice their concerns about the teenage intoxication epidemic. After meeting with Senators and Congressmen, giving interviews to various news agencies, and speaking at community meetings, the group presented sincere and eloquent testimony before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse.[8]

*See appendix B for guidelines.

In the hushed Senate chambers, Joann Lundgren testified:

> The present social scene for our children is a national tragedy. Drug and alcohol use has become the "norm" for young people. They fear rejection by their peers if they do not want to be part of the scene. It takes a teenager with a strong sense of identity to be able to stand up to this accepted "norm." There is a price to be paid whether they choose to participate in the scene or stay out of it....
>
> After becoming aware of the problem, educating adults, and coming to some basic agreements on social guidelines, it is imperative that the adults get the students involved in helping to solve the problem.... Our youth need to experience being able to change the environment in which they find themselves. They also need to feel needed. Being able to talk to younger students and encourage them to stay out of the present social scene or to share with adults what the scene is really like provides an important opportunity.

The parents' concerns were then echoed by the courageous testimony of two Gunn High School students. For one 17-year-old girl, the partying scene had brought pain and dishonesty into a previously happy family:

> I had always been very honest with my parents about what I did, up until I started using liquor and marijuana. I finally told them what I was doing on the weekends, because I hated to lie to them like other kids I knew who lied to their parents. They were shocked, and very hurt. They asked me to promise not to drink or smoke marijuana, but if I stopped I wouldn't have anything to do with my friends... From then on, when I asked to go out, my parents refused, and we fought or I would sneak out.
>
> When my sophomore year came around, the partying I did was more intense, because I was unhappy at home. As a result, I did poorly in school, and had trouble forming relationships with others. The only time I was happy was on the weekends.
>
> This is how I finally quit. One night I went out with my friends after a fight with my parents, and I got very, very drunk. I drank so much that I almost

overdosed on the alcohol. It was as if I could view myself objectively--my mind and body were detached. Frankly, what I saw made me want to cry. I couldn't believe the young girl getting sick was me. The following week I transferred high school to get a clean start at a new school. I didn't party any more. True, I didn't have as many friends as I did when I partied, but I learned to like myself, and I gained back my parents' trust. To me, that is quite enough compensation.

For 17-year-old Walter Hays, staying straight in high school had been a lonely and unrewarding experience:

I have never been personally involved in drugs, but I feel as if I know what it is like. I have a sister who was heavily involved in the party scene for two years. Looking back on those times, I can see how torn apart our family became on account of my sister's involvement in drugs. My parents and my sister fought all the time... My family was in turmoil....

I never tried drugs, mainly because I saw what they had done to my sister. I saw no reason that getting drunk or high could be worth losing my parents' trust.

Because of my decision not to take drugs, my social life suffered. I did not have many good friends, and I was always on the outskirts of the social scene. To fill this gap in my life, I became involved in many extracurricular activities such as student government, theatre, and Boy Scouts. I was soon busy enough that I didn't feel as lonely, but I was never really comfortable at school. I wasn't asked to parties or to go out with people because I didn't go to the parties....

This year my involvement with Parents Who Care has changed things for me. It has let me know that I am not alone. By helping me find and meet people who don't use drugs, Parents Who Care has helped make me more sure of myself at school. I feel that I have a much stronger base now than I did last year.

As Joann Lundgren concluded, teenagers who care need a chance to feel their own moral strength and social effectiveness, in the same way that parents who care need an opportunity for constructive action.

After speaking to parent groups in Annapolis, Maryland, the Palo Alto group flew on to Atlanta to present a panel and workshop for the national parent conference. Gunn High School senior Sarah Lundgren proudly described how Parents Who Care had started because her mother and a friend were worried about the "get high" social scene. Sarah recalled her own loneliness as a straight ninth-grader and her growing determination that there be more opportunities for kids who wanted to stay drug-free. "We needed the support and hard work of the parents to get us in a position to speak out in school, to take a stand," Sarah noted, "or we couldn't have much influence on something as big as the party world."

Mark Daly, another senior, described the development of their core group of 40-50 seniors who met every Monday night to discuss the scene and to plan alternatives. "You don't have to be straight to come," he pointed out, "Nobody is put down. Everybody can speak out, whether they're into drugs or not." Fifty seniors eventually signed up to sponsor some kind of alternative activity during the year, ranging from volleyball games to square dances. Much to everyone's surprise, by March 1981 a senior dinner drew 150 students from a class of 450. Feeling encouraged about the changing attitudes among their own classmates, a group of "Seniors Who Care" spoke to small groups of parents and students. Soon, similar groups started in every grade level at the high school. The ninth-graders, who were hesitant at first about seeming like goody-goodies, sponsored a Friday sports night and couldn't believe it when 100 of their class of 400 showed up--and had a ball! In May the Gunn students sponsored a New Games Day and invited their cross-town rival, Palo Alto High School, for a full day of zany games, giant Earth Balls, barbecue, and an outdoor dance. "Everybody's talking about us now," laughed Mark.

At the Atlanta conference the Palo Alto students met with a small group of teenagers from Florida and Louisiana who were interested in developing peer support groups in their schools. "The kids from Louisiana who work with the SAPE teams (Substance Abuse Prevention and Education) gave us some ideas for getting help for serious drug abusers," noted one boy. "None of us had been heavy drug users, and we didn't know much about the stages of addiction. The SAPE kids pointed out that alternatives will work for the kids who aren't addicted yet, but the compulsive users need strong intervention and professional help."

Fifth-grader Bill Colletti, from Florida, told the California kids how last year he had accepted the challenge of Bill Barton,

president of the National Federation of Parents, that kids start looking out for their friends. After his mother, Shirley Colletti, got involved in the parent movement, Bill started a program called STAMP (Students Teaching About Marijuana Problems) in his Florida grammar school. Using homemade posters with diagrams of the human body, he described the biological effects of drugs to his schoolmates in grades 4-6. "It seems to have worked," exclaimed the rosy-cheeked 11-year-old. "Because we have a 100 percent drug-free fifth grade!"

When the Gunn parents and teenagers returned to Palo Alto, they felt renewed enthusiasm for spreading their movement. "Some of the kids were beginning to waver," observes Joann Lundgren, "because we're still in an uphill struggle in California. But getting the recognition and support from all those parents and kids from different parts of the country really firmed up their convictions. Teenagers need to be needed, and they learned that it's not just their friends and little brothers and sisters who need them drug-free and productive--their country needs them."

In 1981-82 the increasing media coverage of the parent movement in California led to many new groups who either joined Parents Who Care as incorporated chapters or who took other names and independent roles. Some groups began to link up in networks to lobby for antiparaphernalia legislation and marijuana crop eradication. Carla Lowe, a PTA leader in Sacramento, spearheaded the State legislative effort and served as California liaison with the National Federation of Parents. Carol Stein, in Ventura County, worked to bring parents and professionals into a more positive working relationship. At the Center for Human Development, in Lafayette, director Jeanne Gibbs published a newsletter at county expense to keep the different parent groups in touch with new ideas. NIDA's PYRAMID Project supplied the groups with updated curriculum options to introduce into school prevention projects.

But, most important, the "second wave" of advocates for the drug-free lifestyle steadily expanded, as the Teens Who Care gained increasing confidence and influence among their peers. With parents adhering to their collective social guidelines for healthy and legal activities for youngsters, and with parents and teenagers opening up communication about changes in the partying scene, a steady decrease in drug and alcohol use was observed all over the Bay Area. Increasingly, students felt more "at home" at straight parties, as the "natural highs" of lively conversation, working together, honesty, friendship, and concern for others steadily replaced the chemical highs of the teenage drug culture.

"Recent surveys show that there's somewhat more cocaine being used and still some serious problems with the 10 to 15 percent of the kids who are heavy users," reports Margery Ranch of San Carlos. "But there's been a significant decrease in experimentation and regular weekend use, as the social acceptance changes." By working closely with Superintendent of Schools Harry Reynolds, and with the high school principals, Parents Who Care groups were soon able to change the behavior of students at senior graduation nights and at the proms. Remembering the 1978 news story about the intoxicated party-goers at Bay Area proms, one parent predicted that by 1984 there will be news stories describing the exemplary behavior of the vast majority of drug-free teenagers.

By April 1981 Parents Who Care was able to sponsor 15 students from seven high schools in the San Francisco area to visit Atlanta for the National Parents' Conference on Youth and Drugs. George Buonocore, principal of Westmont High School, and five parents accompanied the students, who had sought financial support for the trip from auto dealers, civic clubs, and other local businesses. For the first time a National Youth Conference was held as part of the parents' symposium. For many "scarred veterans" of the parents' struggle against the drug culture--assembled from 40 States and four foreign countries--the enthusiastic participation of the young people sent an inspiring message that, from now on, it will be parents and kids <u>together</u> who will steadily reclaim a drug-free social norm from the intoxication culture.

The California teenagers--glowing with good health, bubbling with enthusiasm, and firm in their convictions--joined First Lady Nancy Reagan and hundreds of youngsters aged 9-19 to talk frankly about the intense social pressures to use drugs and alcohol. But the Teens Who Care also spoke out--with humor, cheerfulness, and realism--about the strong positive role that kids can play to change the "get high" mentality among their classmates.

At the youth workshops, where the California youngsters led small group discussions, Michelle Seden, from Sunnyvale, learned that the 15 Georgia students at her table had mixed feelings about their social scene, but that they felt somewhat initimidated by the prospect of being the first ones to stick their necks out to change it. Trying to get them to think about how important their role could be, Michelle asked how many had younger brothers and sisters. Most did. Then she asked, "What will you do when they come to you and say, 'Why can't I? You did!'" Darron Myers, from San Carlos, discussed his grief over the

death of a cousin in a drug-related car wreck and worried that more friends would be killed. Several teen discussion leaders were distressed, in turn, to hear fourth-graders tell about being offered drugs by older teenagers.

When the Teens Who Care visited an Atlanta high school to speak to nearly 1,000 students in two assemblies, they expressed their appreciation for the national parent movement--which had started in 1976 at a backyard party just 6 blocks from the high school. Recounting their personal experiences in the "get high" social scene, the California students talked about the emptiness and uselessness of so much intoxicated partying. When they described their efforts to change the inevitability of getting drunk or stoned by providing alternative parties, dozens of hands shot up among the Atlanta high schoolers. The audience asked probing questions, cracked jokes, tossed out suggestions--and gave the California teenagers a resounding ovation.

Several younger brothers and sisters of kids who had been at the Atlanta "birthday bust" were sitting in the audience. For the first time they sensed how far the parent movement had spread from their neighborhood. For all the younger kids, their own parents' activism and public role had been embarrassing, annoying, boring, and confusing at times. Dinners had burned and wash had gone unfolded. Phones rang constantly, papers were piled on tables, and sometimes it seemed that their mothers spent more time "narc-ing" than raising their own kids. But when Andrea Tonelli, from Santa Clara, thanked the Atlanta and California parents for caring enough to get involved, it was an emotional high point for the proud younger kids. Later, speaking spontaneously and from the heart, Andrea told the parents assembled from all over America, "Us teenagers need you guys. We need your help. We want to turn around what's now acceptable behavior, to expand the straight life-style into the majority. With all of us pitching in together to make it happen, I just know it's gonna work!"

NOTES

1. Rapoport, R. Senior prom--night of glamour. San Francisco Chronicle, June 16, 1978.

2. Murray, G. The kids who don't: Pot temptation is great. Vista Press, October 25, 1978.

3. Ibid.

4. Landers, A. Palo Alto parents get recognition for caring. The Peninsula Times Tribune, August 1, 1980.

5. Moreillon, S. Parents who care tackle drug, alcohol problems. San Jose Mercury News, January 7, 1981.

6. Buginas, B. Drug seminar brings the problem home. Pleasanton Valley Times, October 10, 1980.

7. To order the booklets "How to Start a Parent Group" and "How to Involve Youth in Changing the Scene", write Parents Who Care, Inc., 703 Welch Rd., Suite H-4, Palo Alto, CA 94304.

8. Testimony of "Parents and Students Who Care," U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse, March 30, 1981.

EPILOG:
THE IMPACT OF THE PARENT MOVEMENT

by Tom Adams*

The nine chapters in this book describe the determination of parents in diverse communities who are fighting to reverse the normalization of drug use among America's youth. Hard work, imagination, and dedication are the ingredients that have made the parent movement a success since its inception during the backyard birthday party in Atlanta in 1976 that led the author of this book, Marsha Mannatt, to write Parents, Peers, and Pot, the nationally known "Bible" of the parent movement funded and published by NIDA to which this book is a natural sequel.

The main message of this book is that parent power works, both as a force to restore the cherishing nature of the family and as a political means to counter the erosion of society caused by the use and abuse of illegal substances by American children in affluent suburbs, inner cities, rural communities and middle-American towns. This book is about prevention--prevention starting with those who are most concerned: parents. It is a story about how parents are using a variety of tactics to accomplish what they feel they must do in order to protect the health of their children.

Obstacles

No one involved in the parent movement ever felt that the awesome task would be easy. The stories in this book present numerous accounts of the struggles parents have faced. What are the obstacles? Frequently one obstacle is parents' own sense of isolation and hurt. On some occasions it is the pervasive use of drugs and alcohol that some youth pronounce as their right to use and abuse with impunity. Some parents provide poor role models and even personally induct their children into the drug and alcohol culture. Others remain apathetic or oblivious to the

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problem and shy away from participation in parent groups. In some communities officials prefer to deny the existence of the problem. Parents are sometimes at odds with professionals who minimize marijuana use, promote "responsible use," and see parents as the problem, rather than children's drug use itself.

Another obstacle is the saturation of prodrug messages in all forms of the media. This enrages and mobilizes parents, who quickly learn that television, films, radio, music, and newsprint journalism can deliver much more attractive images of drug use than parents are capable of counteracting in their antidrug efforts.

To one extent or another, these obstacles and challenges confront parents in every community in America.

Why Do Parents Get Involved?

According to the author of this book, parents get involved in the antidrug movement because they know they must follow their gut instincts to protect their children by helping them grow up healthy. They come to realize, in some cases too late, that illegal drugs (including alcohol) present hazards to their children's physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual health.

In the communities described in these pages, we learn that parents will work hard to enrich the lives of their children and to maintain, ensure, and restore an inherent dignity in their children. They want their children to be of value to themselves as well as others.

Parents know that they must learn about drugs--all there is to know--in order to talk with their children reasonably and credibly. In this act of studying drugs and their effects, parents begin to send a vital message to their children: "I care enough about you to read this often dull and complicated material. I will do anything to help you."

Parents are joining together to gain the needed power to confront the opposition as they see it: a society that has spawned a youthful drug culture and is moving rapidly toward trivializing human existence. By establishing their networks, parents create support systems and become visible in their communities. Most important, they are becoming more actively involved in the lives of their children.

For parents of young children, fear is often the motivating factor--not drug use. The fear is that their young children are vulnerable to illegal drugs and will probably experiment with them and use them unless primary prevention really works--unless they are able to build in their young children a profound respect for their bodies, the law, the family, and a drug-free approach to life.

What Do Parents Want?

These stories vividly reveal what parents across this country are asking for. Foremost, they want their children to be healthy and drug-free. They want to end the confusion about the effects of illegal drug use on their children. No one advocates drug use for children, but parents feel that those responsible for developing antidrug messages and the techniques of conveying them have not been clear. Parents want an unequivocal stand on the issue by all who are responsible for drug abuse prevention and youth.

What Have Parents Learned?

All over the country, this book makes clear, parents have made headway in reversing promarijuana positions. Parents' ventures into the legislative arena have been unique and rewarding. Parents have gotten ordinances passed, brought about the enforcement of neglected laws, and continued to apply pressure through lobbying, occasional boycotts, and promoting new legislation on drinking and driving.

In community after community parents want and have forged positive relationships with school administrators--not always with ease, but with increasing effectiveness. In most communities worried school officials at first deny the existence of a drug problem in their schools. However, the response developed at Northside High School in Atlanta is becoming more frequent--more and more, parents, school officials, and students are working together to design new school policies on drug and alcohol use, attendance, discipline, and school behavior. Parents are pushing both for clear policies and for fair and equitable enforcement.

Parents are also volunteering to do drug education, contact by phone each day those parents whose children are absent from school, help shape school policies, chaperone dances and school events, and monitor school grounds. These active parents have realized that, next to the home, children spend most of their

time in school, and they have learned that they must work to help the school to be a drug-free, positive place where learning can occur.

Parents are creating their own peer pressure as they organize in small, personal groups that help to dispel their sense of isolation and strengthen them through common bonds with other parents. Parent peer groups help them to know that they share values and rules for their children and ways to enforce these rules. Several parents united by similar points of view become a match for the drug-oriented adolescent peer culture.

Finally, parents have learned that they can successfully counter the commercialized drug culture. In some communities headshops have been closed, the sale of paraphernalia is illegal, and prodrug glossy magazines are a recognized enemy of parent groups. Parents are becoming aware of the high cost of the illegal drug industry--a $100 billion cost to the country's economy that they recognize as unnecessary and destructive.

Parent Groups Start In Various Ways

One of the inherent strengths of the parent movement is that any number of people or events may spark parent activism.

As we see in the array of communities described in this book, the spark that ignited an already volatile situation ranges from two hurting parents and their teenagers in a Florida town to the Governor of Texas. In other instances the spark came from parents who were concerned about their baby sitter; from a school official who surveyed parents and learned that drug education was a high priority for them; from a physician who read an article in a medical journal and asked, "Why didn't we know this before now?" In one community the spark was a teenager's letter to the local newspaper; in another it was a drug abuse professional who created a new mood of attention and awareness.

Creativity and Common Sense

In spite of the seriousness of this struggle, many of the leaders of the parent movement have learned to maintain a sense of humor and respond with creativity.

In California an organization called Parents Who Care took out a full-page ad in a local newspaper to tell the community that

they cared and would do something about preventing the drug problem. Hundreds of parents signed it and asked others to join them by filling out an application at the bottom of the page. As a result their ranks swelled.

In New York a town meeting was held to involve the citizenry. In Indiana a letter-writing campaign was launched. In Texas three powerful, prestigious groups were recruited by a top industrialist appointed by the Governor.

In some communities the recruitment of a pediatrician to alert parents and youth has been a major component. The use of physicians to teach about drug abuse prevention and healthy lifestyles has produced results.

Helping youth organize for drug-free alternatives is a powerful new direction that the parent movement has taken. The creation of youth groups that promote drug-free activities has inspired other youth, the schools, parents, and concerned citizens. Youth have begun to reverse peer pressure to use illegal drugs.

Parents are assessing their own lives in some communities and asking hard questions about their own drug-using behavior. Many are concluding that they must present themselves in healthy ways in order to ensure that their young children receive clear messages.

As parent groups have formed they have received support from the outside. They have been able to get the leaders of the movement from other cities and States to come to their communities, usually with support from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. This small amount of cost-shared assistance often provided the impetus that filled school auditoriums, church meeting halls, and living rooms. Equally important, family budgets have been stretched by parents who have used grocery money to make phone calls, copy articles, provide coffee for meetings, drive to workshops, and generally pitch in to take on the drug problem.

Most parents in this movement did not realize in the beginning what they were embarking on--and how strong and pervasive the problem was that they were determined to deal with. If they had known, they might have retreated early.

Parents usually begin with a small network in their own neighborhood. Some feel that this is enough. Others spread into the entire community, embracing the schools, parks departments, businesses, and the media. Parent networks have

expanded to include State organizations and parents and professionals working side-by-side. National organizations are now in place to offer guidance when needed, and to help the movement thrive. This vast partnership is developing the momentum to become a serious contender against the illegal drug culture.

This book tells the story of how the movement symbolized by the author's first major public speech on the topic--"The Family Versus the Drug Culture"--evolved and the many forms it has taken. It inspires others to join the movement. It gives comfort, yet it presents a challenge.

APPENDIX A
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND GUIDELINES DEVELOPED BY UNIFIED PARENTS OF AMERICA, INC.*

GOALS

- To rid our homes and schools of all illegal drugs and to encourage authorities to enforce laws to aid in this endeavor.

- To foster education and cooperation among parents, teachers and young people--in order to help our young people take responsibility for themselves and finish high school free of illegal drugs.

- To encourage communication and involvement by students and parents in the academic, social, athletic and cultural activities at Northside High School, thereby achieving a healthy and satisfactory high school experience.

OBJECTIVE A

That there be instruction on drugs and drinking among adolescents at the August Workshop for administrators and teachers at Northside for at least half a day.

OBJECTIVE B

That all meetings and literature and communication be constructive and NON-BLAMING of our parents, teachers and students.

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*For further information contact: Unified Parents of America, Inc., P.O. Box 27585, Atlanta, GA 30327, 404/351-6694 or 404/351-1269. Reprinted with permission.

OBJECTIVE C

That we include the larger community (Middle Schools, Private Schools, etc.) in our regular meetings, and that we contact the media to inform them of our endeavors and solicit their help.

OBJECTIVE D

That we develop a structure for on-going parent education concerning drugs and drinking among adolescents.

OBJECTIVE E

That we encourage the development of a school policy so that parents will be called by any school person as soon as any drug or alcohol use is suspected, without fear or threat of legal suit. We encourage and will assist a referral system to acceptable counselors and physicians.

OBJECTIVE F

That we ask the Juvenile Court to be involved in our meetings, encouraging them to use creative and effective punishment in dealing with offenders.
That we set up Parent-Teen Guidelines, to suggest rules for social gatherings, etc.

OBJECTIVE G

That we plan and develop healthy social activities and encourage students and parents to participate in all kinds of school-sponsored activities, such as: sports, band, drill team, drama, student activities.
That we encourage the administration to sponsor more intramural activities.

GUIDELINES

These guidelines concern the shared responsibilities of parents, high school teenagers and teachers to each other and to the community. They are presented because the Special Committee believes they will help to accomplish our goal of a healthy lifestyle. The Committee understands that in some families the guidelines will be too restrictive; in others, too permissive. Nevertheless, they suggest fair and reasonable standards which, it is hoped, will be adopted by concerned parents.

I. SCHOOL

Everyone needs to be aware of, cooperate with, and support school regulations and rules as set forth in the NORTHSIDE HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK (distributed without charge to every student this year), even if they cause some personal inconvenience. Parents and students should pay particular attention to policies concerning absences, tardiness, school-hour appointments, lunch-hour privileges, detention and homework.

II. SOCIAL LIFE OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

A. Curfews are necessary for safety and cooperation within each family and among families. The following are suggested:

- o School week: home after supper, except for specific event approved by parent;
- o Weekends: 9th grade: 11:00 p.m. 10th grade: 11:30 p.m. 11th grade: 12 midnight. 12th grade: 12:30 a.m.
- o Holidays and vacations: 10:30 p.m., weekends as above, with reasonable exceptions.

B. Parties should be chaperoned by adults who are occasionally visible, and alcohol and drugs should not be available or served. In addition,

- o Small parties should be encouraged;

- o Anyone with alcohol or drugs should be told to leave the premises;

- o Parents should feel free to contact host parents and offer assistance;

- o Parents should have the telephone number and address of the party, and should expect a call from their teenager in case of any location change.

C. Parent-teen cooperation is vital, keeping in mind that parents can be held liable to civil and criminal charges if injury to a minor results from underage alcohol consumption or illegal drug use on their premises; moreover, a car can be impounded if it is stopped for any reason and ANYONE in the car is in possession of illegal drugs. In addition:

- o Parents and teens should know where to reach each other by phone;

- o Parents should be awake (or expect to be awakened) when a teenager comes in at night--this time is an opportunity for open communication;

- o Parents should get to know the parents of their teen's friends.

III. DISCIPLINE

Parents are urged not to treat lightly the use of marijuana or any other illegal drug by their teenagers, and to learn drug-use symptoms!

A. Parents should support school discipline and contact the administration if they have any questions.

B. Appropriate, consistent discipline indicates concern for and love of teenagers. Grounding and/or removal of car privileges are effective disciplinary means during the high school years.

C. If behavior problems continue (drug use, cutting classes, etc.) parents should, without hesitation, consult the principal if necessary; he can give recommendations for professional assistance.

APPENDIX B

GUIDELINES FOR HOW TO GIVE A SUCCESSFUL PARTY DEVELOPED BY PARENTS WHO CARE

The planning of a social activity is the most important aspect of the activity, ensuring its success. It provides an opportunity for dialogue and cooperation between parents and teenagers and for the teaching of social skills. The fun and success of your party will be a direct result of your efforts!

I. INITIAL PLANNING BETWEEN TEENAGERS AND PARENTS (Parties are usually more fun and successful if given with others)

A. Set ground rules.
   1. No alcohol or drugs allowed
   2. Rules of house, etc.
B. Agree on basic plan for party
C. Work together to make the party a success

Parent Responsibilities	Teen Responsibilities
Be visible and available, support, low profile, #of parents depends on size of party and activities.	Take responsibility for preparation.
Be visible when guests arrive.	Start activities, let people know where things are.
Help (like in kitchen) so party givers can	Encourage guests to participate.
Enforce no drugs, alcohol.	Discourage undesirable behavior, get parent help if needed.
	Have fun yourself.

II. PURPOSE OF PARTY, WHAT KIND OF PARTY? (Suggestions)

Birthday party	Class party	Beach party
Surprise party	Costume party	Bike hike -picnic
Celebration	Holiday party	Progressive dinner
Team party	Theme party	

III. SPECIAL ACTIVITIES TO BE INCLUDED IN PARTY
(Suggestions)

Volleyball	Pool	Haunted house
Softball	Dancing	Art project
Soccer	Games	Contests
Frisbees	Band	Ice cream making
Horseshoes	Records	Pinatas
Ping pong	Tapes	Themes: western,
Hay ride	Movies	hat, toga,
Cards	Magician	Mexican, luau
Swimming	Badminton	Pot luck, barbeque
Water games	Backgammon	Roller skating
Basketball	Midnight supper	Ice skating
Tug o'war	Guitarist - singer	Speaker, celebrity
Kites	Pumpkin carving	Scavenger hunt

IV. LOCATION OF PARTY

A. Where will the party be held?
B. What are the facilities?
   1. Are they appropriate for the activities?
   2. Are they adequate for the number of people?
C. What equipment is lacking or needed?
D. Indoor? Outdoor?
E. Parking?

V. GUESTS

A. How many? (small is usually better, 20-25)
B. Is the number right for the facility and the activities?
C. Is the group compatible with the kind of party?

VI. INVITATIONS

A. Should include: Kind of party, activities, date, time, place, if meal is being served, special information, appropriate dress.
B. Hours: Do they fit activities? Are they appropriate for the ages of the group?
C. Should guests bring anything?
   1. To help--be involved with party (food, game, etc.)
   2. To participate--(costume, present, bathing suit, towel)

VII. DECORATIONS--The decorations determine the atmosphere and mood of the party.

A. Is there a theme?
B. What decorations are appropriate for type of party?
C. Equipment needed? (tables, chairs, flowers, hurricane lamps, indoor-outdoor lighting, table cloths, posters, special effects, etc.)

VIII. FOOD AND DRINK PREPARATION--All possible preparation should be done in advance. Food should be simple, good and what teenagers like. Guests may be asked to contribute food. It is better than asking for money and makes guests feel involved.

A. Plan menu--(when guests arrive, meal, ongoing snacks, desserts, whatever is appropriate). Remember things like salt, pepper, dressings, garnishes.
B. Plan equipment needed--serving dishes and utensils, eating dishes and utensils, preparing and cooking dishes and utensils--also special equipment (barbeque), napkins, etc.
C. Purchase food (watch ads for food specials)
D. Prepare as much as possible in advance. Drinks should be provided in abundance (soft drinks, lemonade, punch, ice tea, etc.)
E. Plenty of ice available in containers, bottle openers, glasses.
F. Provisions for refuse should be made and apparent.

IX. SCHEDULE AND PLANNING OF ACTIVITIES

A. Plan a schedule of how the party's activities will flow.
   1. Plan to keep things moving.
   2. Be willing to be flexible.
   3. What will be happening when people arrive? Plan an icebreaker.
B. Planning of activities:
   1. Be sure you have all of the equipment needed for each activity planned (purchased, borrowed).
   2. Have everything set up and ready to go.

X. GIVE PARTY! HAVE A GOOD TIME!

XI. CLEAN UP!

Social life with friends and music are an important focus in a teenager's life. A healthy setting helps them learn to relate positively to each other and to adults. Dances can provide one of these occasions if behavior guidelines are established and enforced. It is the responsibility of parent/chaperones to be clear to students about these expectations. Chaperones and students are more comfortable when they know what's expected so that they can relax and enjoy themselves. Adults are willing to chaperone if they know what's expected of them and that everyone is enforcing the rules.

FOR CHAPERONES:

1. Have one chaperone for every 20 students.
2. Plan to arrive one hour before the dance to meet each other, hear the guidelines, and to help set up if needed.
3. Remember that you are hosts, not policemen. But don't ignore questionable behavior. Ask the person to leave. (If it's a boy, ask a man to help.)
4. Set the tone as you would in your own home on what's expected of teenagers, saying something like, "Hello, how are you? Come on in..." Or, at departure, "I hope you had a good time," or "Did you like the band?" Take the opportunity while working with the teenagers to train them in basic courtesies, i.e., thanking the chaperones.
5. Expect the following rules to be followed:
   - o No one will be admitted to the dance who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
   - o No drugs or alcohol anywhere on the grounds.
   - o No unacceptable behavior.
   - o No leaving dance and returning.
   - o No smoking of any kind.
   - o No admission one hour after dance starts.

OTHER TIPS:

- o First hour is busiest.
- o Refreshments need more help when band takes a break.
- o Bathrooms need constant supervision.
- o Head chaperones will circulate and rotate other chaperones every half-hour to 45 minutes after the first hour.
- o Chaperones stay entire evening.
- o At the end, chaperones straighten up the facility.

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